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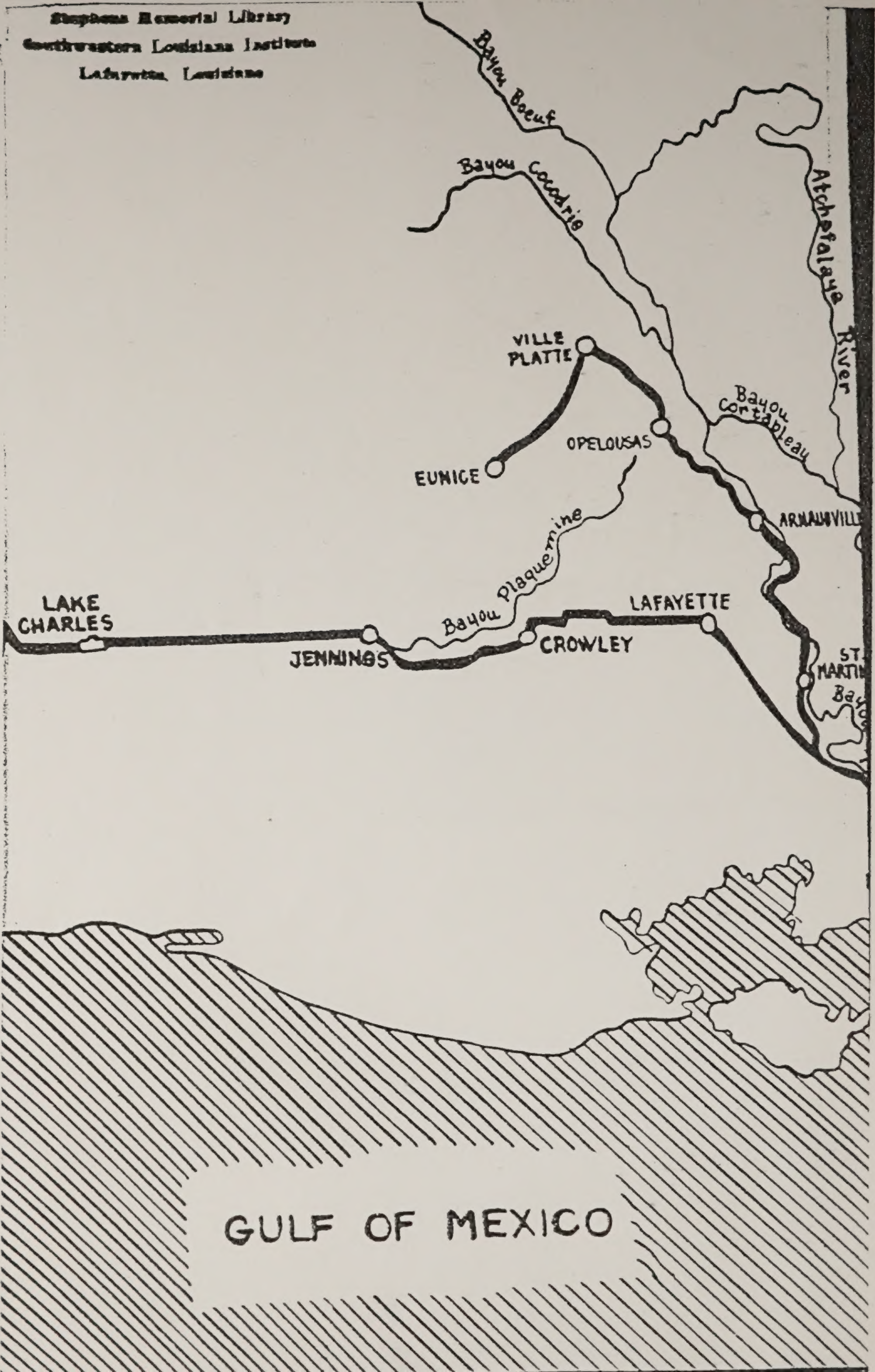
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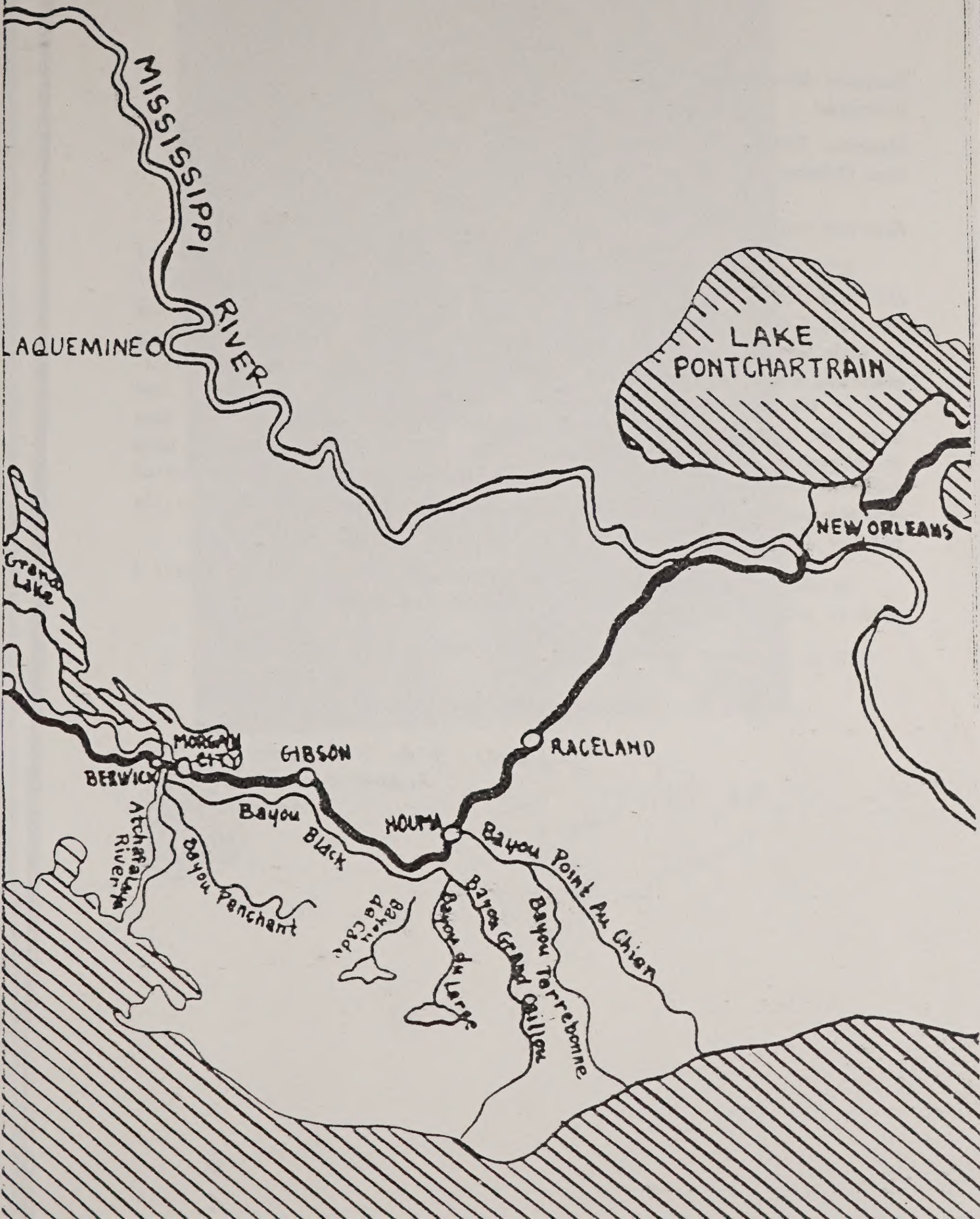
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Reverend Mother Mary Xavier, M.S.C.
Provincial

Marianite Sisters of the Holy Cross
New Orleans, La.

Reverend and dear Mother:

With genuine pleasure I inform you that on this joyous occasion of the celebration of the Centenary of the arrival of the Marianite Sisters of the Holy Cross in the Deep South of the United States and of the beginning of their works there, our Most Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, has very graciously deigned to bestow his special Apostolic Benediction upon the members of the Community, upon their relatives, friends and benefactors, and upon the alumnae of their schools and their relatives and friends who join in celebrating this happy Anniversary Day. This Blessing is granted as a token of the appreciation of His Holiness for the wonderful achievements of the Marianite Sisters during the past one hundred years, especially in the field of Catholic education.

While conveying to you this august message of the Sovereign Pontiff I wish to add my own personal congratulations and good wishes.

With sentiments of esteem and with renewed felicitations, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(Signed) ✝ A. G. Cicognani
Archbishop of Laodicea
Apostolic Delegate.

Pius PP. XII

Most Rev. Amleto Giovanni Cicognani
Apostolic Delegate

MARIANITE CENTENNIAL IN LOUISIANA

*

1848 - 1948

*

Marianites of Holy Cross
Provincial House
New Orleans, La.

Nihil obstat:

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February 29, 1948.

Imprimatur:

† JOSEPH F. RUMMEL,
Archbishop of New Orleans,
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DEDICATION

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May it please Thee, O Lord,
to reward with eternal life
all those who do good to us
for Thy Name's sake. Amen.

. . . ROMAN BREVIARY.

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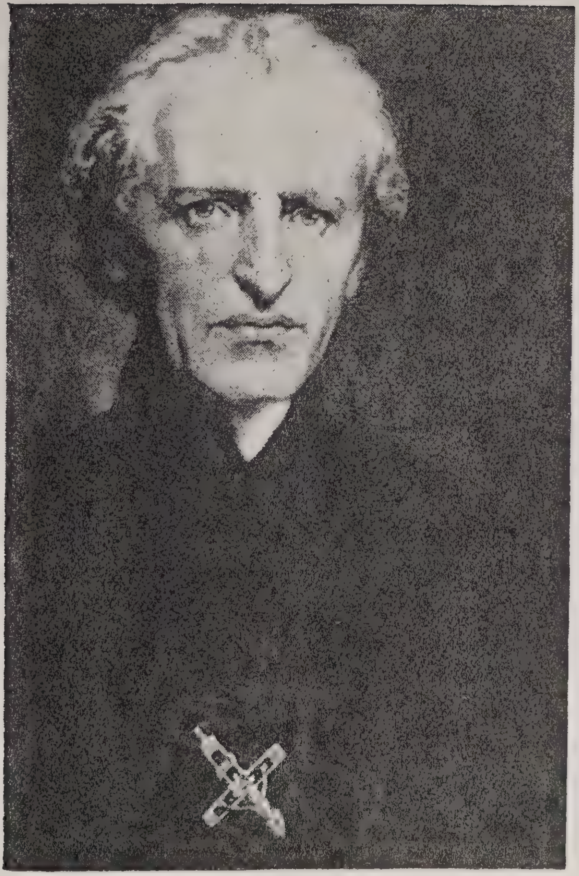

Very Reverend BASIL ANTHONY MARY MOREAU

founder and first Superior General
of the
Congregation of Holy Cross

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EPILOGUE

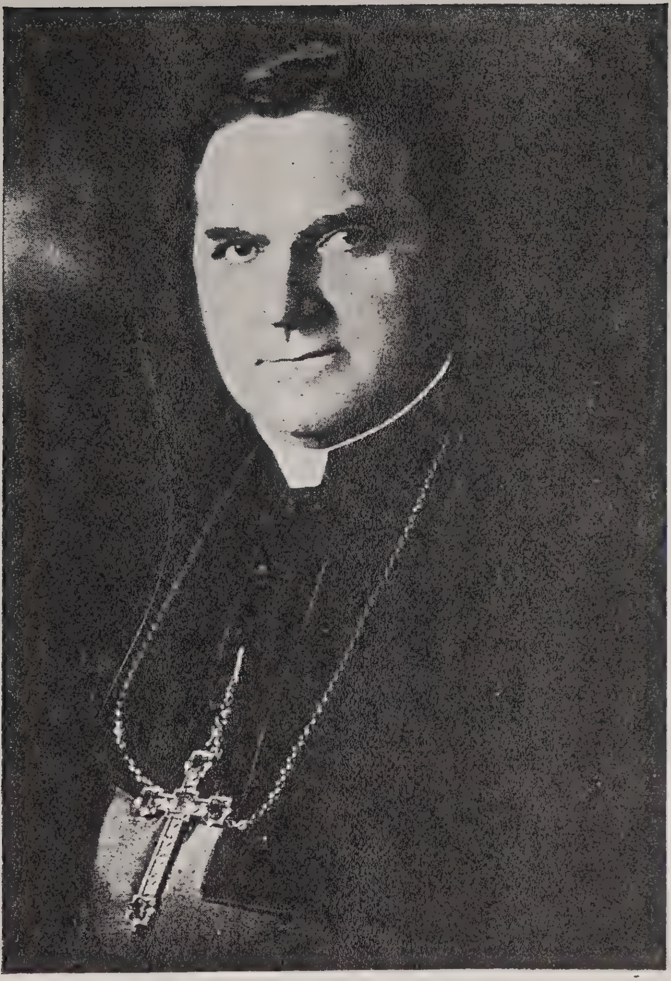
FOREWORD

Evidently we are living in an epoch that is characteristically marked by the observance of centennial commemorations in the service of Almighty God through the ministries of religion, education and charity. In effect this means that we are virtually removed one hundred years from those pioneering days when the Church in the Southland was emerging from its purely missionary state and entering upon the fullness and richness of development which opened for her children larger opportunities for the sanctification of their souls and for the beatification of their lives.

Emphasizing this thought is the fact that we are removed only two years from the centennial observance of the erection of the Diocese of New Orleans to the dignity and prestige of an Archdiocese, July 19, 1950, under the administration of Archbishop Anthony Blanc.

It was this same Archbishop Blanc who in 1847 solicited the assistance of the Mother General of the Sisters Marianites of the Holy Cross, who had been founded only a few years earlier, namely in 1841 at Le Mans, France, under the patronage of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, to take charge of St. Mary's Orphanage for Boys in New Orleans. The first four Sisters arrived April 27, 1848, and courageously undertook the operation of the orphanage, whose financial condition was so impoverished that for months the Sisters depended upon the hospitality of the Ursuline Nuns for their sustenance and had to beg throughout the City for the support of the orphans. The increase of orphans through the yellow fever epidemic necessitated the establishment of a second orphanage for the care of young girls and for the training of older girls in the art of sewing. In both instances the earlier life of the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross in New Orleans was characterized by many hardships and great sacrifices, due largely to the ravages of disease and the impovershment of large sectors of the population. Thus the early foundation of these devoted Sisters in New Orleans was surrounded by the beautiful aureole of the ministry of charity and the apostolic work of training the young.

Soon the spirit of these devoted Sisters attracted the attention of Shepherds of souls throughout the large area which was then known as the Diocese of New Orleans. They pioneered in the establishment of schools in many parishes at the invitation of the Pastors and with the approval of Archbishop Blanc and his successors. In most instances they acquired the property and erected the buildings, depending upon the support of parents for the operation of the schools and academies.



MOST REV. JOSEPH F. RUMMEL, D.D.

Archbishop of New Orleans

Today the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross are operating in this southern area, specifically in the Archdiocese of New Orleans and in the Dioceses of Lafayette and Natchez eighteen elementary schools and ten high schools. The number of Sisters has grown from four to approximately 250, and the small group of children whom the first Sisters from Le Mans took under their care in the spring of 1848 has increased to 9,000 pupils in the elementary schools and 3,500 in the high schools and academies. And yet, their institutions are taxed beyond their capacity and the Sisters are all too few to answer the many calls that are extended to the Community.

Truly, the coming to the Deep South of the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross was a loving dispensation of Divine Providence that envisioned the growing need for educational facilities in the Church of the United States down through the century. The Community's growth and development is but inadequately expressed in the figures that we have just cited. Throughout they have manifested profound appreciation of the dignity and value of the religious life, and they have paralleled their educational services with an appreciative understanding of the need of progressive training of the Sisters for their high vocation as teachers. Thus they have followed the pattern of our Divine Saviour of Whom St. Luke the Evangelist writes: "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace before God and men."

Wholeheartedly, therefore, do we rejoice with the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross of New Orleans in the observance of this centennial, congratulating them upon the progress which the story of one hundred years reveals and with them thanking Almighty God for the many blessings which they have enjoyed through His bountiful goodness. On behalf of the prelates to whose call for service in the field of education they responded with so much alacrity, in the name of the parish priests whose invitations they heeded so generously in the establishment of schools in parish centers in cities and countrysides, for the thousands of parents and the tens of thousands of children that have been blessed with the ministry of these God-loving Sisters we extend to them a tribute of gratitude which expresses our affectionate appreciation and reverence. We pray that Gods' blessing may continue to hover over the Community and that for generations to come the Southland may be blessed with ever increasing numbers of holy women dedicated to the honor of the Holy Cross under the patronage of Our Lady of Sorrows, ever vigilant, ever zealous, ever solicitous for the honor and glory of God and for the welfare of the souls.

† JOSEPH FRANCIS RUMMEL,
Archbishop of New Orleans.

Under the Patronage of St. Joseph,
April 14, 1948.

IN CRUCE DOMINI NOSTRI JESU CHRISTI

Précigné, Sarthe, France
February 19, 1948

My Dear Daughters:

The Mother House at Précigné, Sarthe, France, joins heartily in the tribute to be paid April 13-14, 1948, to the Marianites by the citizens of the State of Louisiana. The Sisters who comprise the General Council and all the Marianites in other parts of the world unite with me in congratulating our Louisiana Sisters upon this One-hundredth anniversary of the Congregation's advent to the Pelican State.

As Superior General of the Congregation during this epoch of the Louisiana Centennial, it gives me great pleasure to add my endorsement and encouragement to the project of publishing the history of the province in honor of this Centenary of its foundation. Since Le Mans, France, is the cradle of the Congregation of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, it is fitting on the part of the Mother House to place a tribute at the feet of its offspring in Louisiana on this memorable occasion.

It is only natural that we in France should glory in the Centennial of our Congregation in a section of the United States so typically French as is Louisiana. Much of the Community's history, with the New Orleans foundation as head and center, has been written in this century. Forty-five years after the cession of Louisiana to the United States, our pioneer Sisters undertook to give the rudiments of a Catholic education, in English and French, to New Orleans youth.

The colorful history of our flourishing Louisiana province is the fruit of the devoted efforts of a long line of worthy Provincials whose traditions echo loudly their valiant endeavors and deeds; however, it is to our dear Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty), the present Provincial. who has already completed her sixteenth year of provincialate, that we owe the deepest gratitude. By her unbounded gentleness, yet firmness, she has impregnated her Province with a vitality and culture of which we are proud. It is fitting on this happy occasion to note that Mother Mary Xavier is the fourth member of her family honored with the office of Provincial. having been preceded by Mother Mary of Holy Cross (Haggerty); Mother Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona (Haggerty); Mother Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan.)

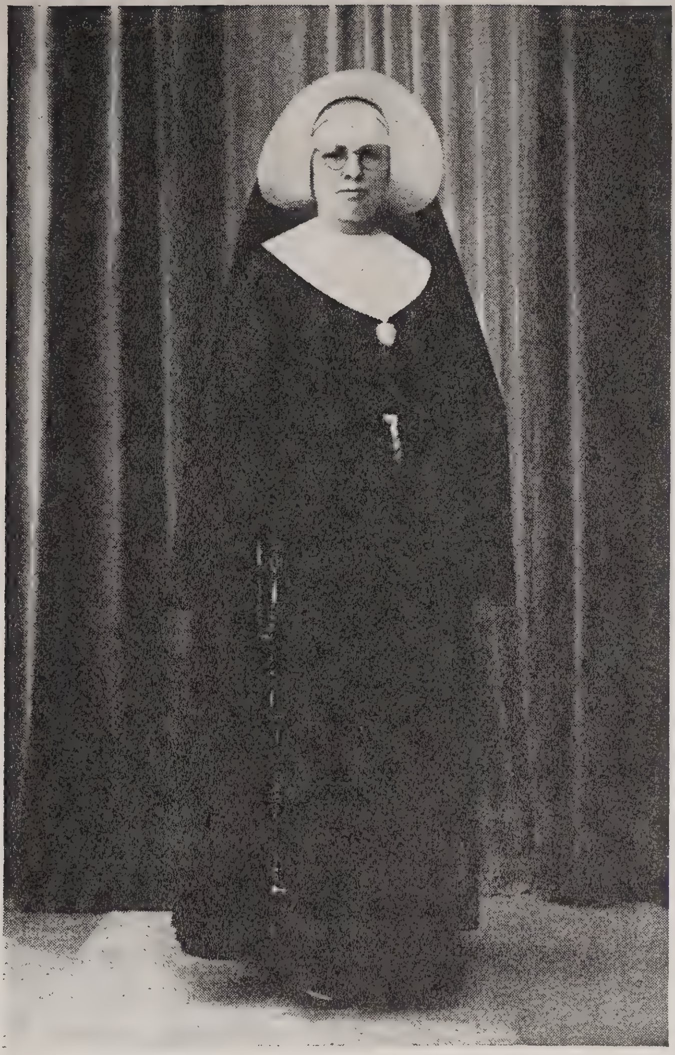
The Mother House, likewise, salutes on this auspicious occasion the Brothers of Holy Cross who share this centenary with the Marianites. It takes cognizance of the wonderful cooperative spirit which has existed between the Brothers of Holy Cross and the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross ever since they managed together the Saint Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum.

God grant that these Centennial days may bring back vividly to our minds the inestimable blessings the Congregation has enjoyed. May this history prove a source of inspiration for a renewal of consecration to the spirit of our holy Founder, the Very Reverend Basil Moreau, and to that of our pioneer Sisters who braved the heat and the burden of the beginnings in Louisiana.

Devotedly, in Our Lady of Seven Dolors,

Sister Mary of St. Odile, M. de S.C.,
Superior General.

To Mother Mary Xavier, M. de S.C.
Provincial Superior,
Louisiana Province,
New Orleans, Louisiana.



SR. MARY OF ST. ODILE, M. DE S.C.
Superior General

PROLOGUE

"Go before us, O Lord, we beseech Thee . . ."

—Raccolta

PROLOGUE

LOUISIANA, scene of the labors of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross since 1848, is a land of enchanting rivers and bayous. Ears attuned to music, thrill to the very sound of their names—Tchefuncta, Bogue Falaya, Atchafalaya. The great Mississippi flows majestically near the portals of the New Orleans foundation. Moss-framed bayous wander about the little towns where Marianites have spent themselves in the service of the Master these past one hundred years—Franklin, on the beautiful Bayou Teche; Morgan City on Bayou Boeuf where it meets the Atchafalaya river; Houma on Bayou Terrebonne; Opelousas near Bayou Cortableau.

There by the streams of the State the Marianites lifted aloft on their buildings the symbol of their sacrifice—the Holy Cross. The zeal, the vital faith, and the passion for sacrifice which distinguished the pioneers of all religious communities were not wanting to the first Marianites, and evidence of these same characteristics remains in the members of the present Congregation.

As God feeds Louisiana's rivers with His rain showers, so has He constantly fed the stream of Marianite labors and achievements with the showers of His grace. Gathering momentum, this life-giving stream of labor has grown into a river of achievement in old foundations and in new missions, with an ever-increasing access of new vocations and of heroic lives.

One hundred years have come and gone. The grain of mustard seed has grown into the great tree of Holy Cross, whose branches now extend beyond the spot where the first planting was made. Christ's arms from the cross enfold the works of Holy Cross. In prophecy, the Cure d'Ars addressed the young French girl, Leocadie Gascoin, who had come seeking his spiritual guidance: "You will be a religious at the foot of the cross; it is a mystic tree whose branches will cover the whole world. Go! All that grows at the foot of the cross is more than good; it is excellent!"[1] Saint Jean

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[1] Chronicles of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, New Orleans Provincial House.

Vianney recognized in Leocadie Gascoin the future Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors who was to contribute so much to the foundation and the expansion of the Marianite Congregation. The fulfillment of his prophecy is seen in the following pages, though they cover the achievements of only one province of Holy Cross, a small fraction of that great fulfillment.

The history begins with a view of the Community's foundation in the historic old city of Le Mans, France. "Tradition has it that Le Mans was visited by Saint Peter's immediate successor, who erected here one of the first bishoprics in the early Church."[2] The following chapters deal with the successive foundations of the several houses and their development and expansion in Louisiana.

The period of the Community's existence in Louisiana, 1848-1948, is not without its historic significance. The Community's growth was parallel with that of Southern Louisiana itself. Its orphanages and educational institutions are products of the social condition peculiar to Louisiana in the nineteenth century—a century which gave rise to charitable and educational enterprises. Consequently, the first institutions fostered by the Marianites will be found to be of this type: St. Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum, founded in 1848, and the Immaculate Conception Orphanage for girls, in 1855.

The measure of a community's progress is in some degree the measure of its Founders. The Congregation of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross was founded in 1841 by the Very Reverend Basil Anthony Mary Moreau[3] in Le Mans, France. Of the Venerable Father Founder, who devoted long years of strenuous labor to the building of the young Community, others have written[4] ably. The lineaments of both the Venerable Father Founder and the first Superior General of the Sisters, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, have been preserved for their spiritual daughters. No biography of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolars, however, has been attempted, but much can be gleaned of her spirit from the perusal of her letters.[5]

A full biographical treatment of the pioneers can not be given in this volume. To all those who cherish the noble traditions of the years of struggle, the names of Mother Mary of the Five Wounds, Sister Mary of Calvary (Marie Robineau) and Mother Mary of the Nativity (Elizabeth Dailey) will be long remembered, and with them those of Mother Mary of Holy Cross (Ellen Haggerty) 1865-1863; Mother Mary of St. Cesaria (Mary McDonnell) 1836-1894; also, 1901-1909; and Mother Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona (Anne

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[2] **Superior Generals**, II. 3, **Centenary Chronicles**, Sisters of the Holy Cross, Indiana.
[3] Reverend Gerald Fitzgerald, C.S.C., **Juxta Crucem**.
[4] Reverend Charles Moreau, C.S.C., **Life of Father Moreau**.
[5] **The Spirit of Mother Seven Dolors—Her Letters to her Daughters.**

Haggerty) 1895-1899, who served the Congregation in Louisiana with devotion and distinction.

A Congregation of this type should, with its historic backgrounds, afford an interesting study, for it has been the privilege of the Marianites of Holy Cross in Louisiana for one hundred years to train others to leadership in all that is truly Catholic, truly American. The Congregation conducts in Louisiana nineteen grade schools, ten high schools or academies, and one fully accredited college for its Sisters. Enrollments in the Marianites' schools in the State reach an annual total of 1,200 high-school girls and boys and 8,500 grade children, a total of 9,700 of the State's youth.

Finally, there will be disclosed in this history, by their exemplary lives, the "unsung and the unstoried" Marianites who left to their successors a treasured system of administration. Rich in the human interest of the years 1848-1948, as well as the spiritual fabric of that period, the Marianites' history is revealed for the edification of the present generation of Sisters and the friends of the Congregation. Viewed as an individual Community, it is to be hoped that its history may prove of some value both as a contribution to the history of the Church in Louisiana and as a survey to which not only the members of the Community but also their friends and students may turn to view the setting, the aims, the difficulties and the progress of those who sailed these waters before them in order to gain new strength and inspiration.

Released from its moorings at the foot of the Cross, this Centennial record of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross in Louisiana goes afloat upon the stream of time, of which the rivers and the bayous are also fitting symbols.

PART ONE

THE FIRST RAYS FROM HOLY CROSS

"In all our doings . . ."

CHAPTER ONE

EMBRACING HOLY CROSS

THE PRAYER, "Direct, O Lord, all our actions."[1] forms a fitting theme for the divisions of these Marianite memories—foundation, growth, and future horizons. The modern Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, who enjoyed the Marianites' hospitality when she first came to New Orleans, was fond of quoting Saint Paul's words: "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me."[2] In a similar manner, the early Marianite pioneers realized that Christ was for them the wellspring of all things. Most edifying are the cherished memories of these heroic hearts pulsating with the generosity of love for Christ that prompted them to give all and ask only for the grace to do more.

In prophetic vision, the Very Reverend Basil Anthony Mary Moreau, Founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, said:

> The tree of the Cross has been planted in the land where our worthy religious dwell, sometimes tried by lack of funds, sometimes sickness, sometimes by other trials. But they know how to eat the fruit that grows on the Tree of the Cross; and if it pleases God to keep them in their admirable dispositions which have characterized them thus far, they will never taste death for the fruits which the Cross produces have the virtue of the fruit of the Tree of Life planted in the terrestrial paradise![3]

The pale, intelligent, ascetic Basil Anthony Mary Moreau, who established the Congregation of Holy Cross, was born February 11, 1799, the ninth son of a family of fourteen. His father was a wine merchant in the village of Laigne-en-Belin, France. Poverty, hard work, and a singular spirit of self-immolation marked the training Louise Pioger and Louis Moreau gave their children.

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[1] The prayer, "Actiones nostras" from the **Raccolta,** p. 521; also to be found in the Roman Missal

[2] **Phil.** IV. 13.

[3] **Circular Letter** of Reverend Basil Anthony Mary Moreau, dated January 8, 1841.

Louis Moreau and his devoted spouse instilled into their children a knowledge of God, and inspired them with a love for Holy Mother the Church. They exercised them in hard work, encouraging them in filial obedience and respect for authority; but they could not afford to give even one of their offspring a classical education. The youthful Basil received his primary education from the saintly Father Julien le Provost, Pastor of Laigne,[4] his course of studies comprising Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and the explanation of the Catechism. Basil Moreau, in his youth, forms a good parallel with Don Bosco. As a boy, Don Bosco would gather his companions about him and repeat verbatim the sermons he had been privileged to hear. Young Basil Moreau organized his companions into a select company of which he was the leader, and trained them to serve Mass and, to participate in various liturgical ceremonies of the Church. Not contented with this, he erected an altar in his home at which he often "officiated," not omitting a sermon to which his pious mother and his sisters[5] would listen with irreproachable gravity.

Early in his youth, Basil Moreau received his call to the priesthood, but the meager resources of his family made it necessary for him to contribute to the support of the household for some time before entering the seminary.

He worked as a shepherd near his native village carrying his Latin books to the pasture with him, where he studied and dreamed of the realization of his vocation. Such is the picture one biogropher sketches of the youthful Basil taking his first steps towards the altar of God:

> Thereafter when the weather was fine in the Moreau pasture one might observe the bowed form of a shepherd lad seated on a bench, a Latin grammar on his knee, his lessons intermingled with pleasant reveries of the future in which the gentle tinkling bells of his leisurely feeding flock became strangely interwoven with Mass chimes. and himself, a priest, bowed before the Lamb of God,[6]

Through the beneficence of Father le Provost and the gifts of a generous benefactress, Basil was educated at Chateau Gontier College for the priesthood.

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[4] **Life of T.R.P. Basile Antoine Marie Moreau,** Extrait l'ourrage de l'Abbe Charles Moreau, p. 3, written by a Religious of Holy Cross, Saint Laurent, Canada.

[5] Fitzgerald, C.S.C., op. cit., p. 6.

[6] Ibid., op. cit., p. 8.

At College the youth distinguished himself by his piety, his mortification, and his zeal for ecclesiastical studies.

At the age of nineteen Basil Moreau had completed his preparatory studies at the little Seminary at Chateau Gontier. He came to Le Mans in September, 1818 to begin his studies at the major seminary of Saint Vincent. He was an unusually brilliant student. Thus he was presented early for Minor Orders July 30, 1819; on May 27, 1820 for the subdiaconate, and on April 7, 1821 for the diaconate. He completed his studies for the priesthood at the age of twenty-two, two years before the canonical age, and was ordained by virtue of a special Papal dispensation August 12, 1821 in the chapel of the old Visitation Convent, Notre Dame de la Couture.

For two years Father Moreau pursued his studies with the Sulpicians in Paris and at the Solitude in Issy,with every intention of becoming a missionary. "His mind and heart carried his thoughts to distant lands. Europe, America, Africa, and Asia were scarcely big enough to satisfy his zeal. His personal letters reveal that he burned to make himself an apostle among the poor. 'I sometimes have such a desire for this work,' he wrote, 'that I feel the heat of it in my breast.'[7]"[8]

But God had other designs for Basil Moreau. Later, as the Founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, since he himself could not go in person to the ends of the earth in search of souls, he would endeavor to send his spiritual sons everywhere. In the meantime there was other work for him to do. His first assignment was to teach Philosophy in the preparatory college at Tesse. He was appointed professor in the Grand Seminary at Le Mans, and filled this office from 1823 to 1836. He was named honorary canon in 1825, and was elected assistant superior of the Seminary in 1834. He was promoter of the Treasury of the Diocesan Retreat.

A period of apostolic activity ensued for Father Moreau. Under the direction of Bishop Carron he raised funds for the support of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, contributed his own property to a home for aged and infirm priests, and in May, 1833, had the happiness of being instrumental in establishing at Le Mans the Convent of the Good Shepherd. He established, to aid the work, an association of the faithful approved by Gregory XVI.

In 1835 Father Moreau was charged by Monsignor Bouvier, Bishop of Le Mans to renew the almost extinct institute of Brothers of St. Joseph, commenced by Monsignor Dujarie:

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[7] January 28, 1822, Letter to M. Fillion.

[8] Quoted from Circular Letter No. 12, Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., Washington, D. C. November 26, 1942, p. 2.

> The venerable founder, Monsignor Dujarie, realizing that he was worn out by years and infirmities, informed his Bishop that he was no longer able to govern and guide the Brothers of Saint Joseph. He offered to resign his charge into his Lordship's hands, that he in turn might entrust the heroic band to some worthy priest. Monsignor Bouvier, Bishop of Le Mans, and the Brothers were unanimous in their choice of Father Moreau. Recognizing the finger of God in this selection, and feeling strongly attracted toward the devoted little community, whose admirable vocation he thoroughly appreciated, Father Moreau did not hesitate to accept the new charge.[9]

In this way the Brothers of Saint Joseph and the Auxiliary Priests were first brought together and governed by the same Superior, though they were not officially united until some years later.

Father Moreau transferred the Brothers' house from Ruillé-sur-Loir to Holy Cross, a small property of his, and there commenced the work of the Auxiliary Priests. He laid the foundations of Our Lady of Holy Cross, and, in 1833, opened a primary boarding school. Here he received Monsignor Dujarie, who, until 1838, was the object of his tenderest care.

In 1837, Father Moreau established, to aid the work of the Brothers, an association of St. Joseph, approved by Gregory XVI. In 1838, he opened a classical course at Holy Cross, and in 1839 laid the first foundations of the Institute of the Fathers of Holy Cross. In 1840, he founded the first establishments of Algeria, and in 1841 the first American mission. The same year he founded the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross.

In 1842, Father Moreau commenced the conventual church of Our Lady of Holy Cross. He was named Missionary Apostolic in 1846, and in 1849 he obtained from the French government the right of the full operation for the College of Our Lady of Holy Cross. This same year he sent, at the request of Most Reverend Antoine Blanc, Bishop of New Orleans, Louisiana, a band of his devoted followers to take charge of St. Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum, New Orleans. In 1850 he went to Rome to found, on a property belonging to His Holiness, Pius IX, the Orphanage of Vigna Pia. In 1851 he sent a new band of the Marianite Sisters at the request of Bishop Blanc, to found an orphanage and an industrial school for girls, known in New Orleans as the Immaculate Conception Industrial School for Girls.

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[9] Rev. James J. Trahey, C.S.C., Ph.D., **The Brothers of Holy Cross**, p. 33. These facts are taken mainly from Rev. Charles Moreau, Life of Basile-Antoine Moreau du Mans, and his works, Paris, 1900.

Father Moreau sent to Bengal, India, in 1852, missionaries demanded by the Propaganda. He obtained of the French government in 1853 the legal recognition of the Good Shepherd in Le Mans. In 1856, he repaired to Rome, to solicit of His Holiness the approval of the work of Holy Cross,and went to Loretto to found a house of the Good Shepherd.

In 1857, he had the satisfaction of having the Salvatorists, or Fathers of Holy Cross, and the Josephites approved, and the church of Holy Cross consecrated. The same year he visited the American missions.

For example's sake, Father Moreau resigned the canonship in 1858. In 1860 one of his followers was named Bishop of Bengal, and he was consecrated in the church of Our Lady of Holy Cross. Father Moreau went to Rome in 1864 and 1866 in the interest of his Congregation. In 1867, he was consoled for many reverses by the Apostolic approbation of his daughters, the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross.

In 1869, Father Moreau was afflicted by the sale of Our Lady of Holy Cross, owing to the assumption of an immense debt contracted without permission by the treasurer of the house of Paris. Toward the end of April, 1869, he writes:[10]

> Everyone will have left Holy Cross in three days, and tomorrow I go to give a little ten-day mission near Saint-Calais. Thus Divine Justice passes upon us, and those who had wished to cast me out are themselves rejected. On my return, I shall retire to the home of my two sisters while waiting the final despoilment. I shall follow my rules as best I can.

The Holy Father had granted him the privilege of choosing his own place of residence,[11] so he chose to remain separated from his beloved establishment only by a narrow street at the lodgings of his two sisters, Number 20, rue de Notre Dame de Sainte-Croix.[12]

Father Moreau then left Holy Cross, taking with him only his breviary and his chalice, and again commenced his apostolic works which he continued until his death. He was able to continue in possession of the armchair which had served him exclusively for a bed during the past twenty years, because of the thoughtfulness and charity of his Marianite daughters, who bought this armchair for Father Moreau at the auction of Our Lady of Holy Cross.[13]

A note[14] from Reverend Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors addressed to the Founder in the month of April, 1869, reveals the charity of the Marianites for their spiritual father and for his aging sisters:

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[10] Vie, Book V, p. 360 Quoted by Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 263.

[11] Vie, Book V., p. 405, also quoted by Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 263.

[12] Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 263.

[13] Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 264.

[14] Vie, Bk. V, Chap. XII, p. 406.

> My Most Reverend Father, if I am not mistaken, it is tomorrow that the religious dwelling at Notre Dame de Sainte-Croix are to leave. I come, in the name of all your daughters of the Mother House, to pray you to permit us to bring you your meals in whatever place you will designate. We will consider as a favor, Most Reverend Father, this privilege that we so desire you to grant us. In courtesy you will not refuse this favor to your daughters who have a prior right. We wish and desire to do the same for your sisters.

The Founder replied:[15]

> I have counted upon this, and your letter gives still another proof that I have reason to do so. However, I do not wish to trouble you before time and become an expense to you when I am so desirous of reducing your poverty and of making amends for your privations if not for the loss of the funds you confided to my administration. God knows what I suffer by reason of this state of affairs, but it is necessary to bow one's head, and to see in the blows that rain upon us rather God's mercy than His justice.

Two more disappointments were in store for Father Moreau—In the same year, 1869, the Holy See had granted permission to the Indiana province of Holy Cross to withdraw from the French Motherhouse as to administration. In that year Rome had directed the separation of the priests and Brothers from the Sisters of the Holy Cross in matters both spiritual and temporal. In 1872 the great sorrow of seeing the missions in India closed seemed to be the dregs of the cup of sorrow that he was draining.

On the twelfth of August, 1872, he celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his priesthood in the conventual chapel of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, Le Mans. On the twentieth of January, 1873, he died, blessed by Pope Pius IX.

This great servant of God never sought repose in a bed, but spent the greater part of the night in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, and then took a little rest in his armchair. He possessed a rare gift of eloquence, and such was the unction of his words, that the hardest hearts were touched, and he worked the most astonishing conversions.[16] He continued his preaching to the end of his life, being engaged in giving a mission when he was summoned to appear before the Divine Master Whom he had served so faithfully.

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[15] Vie, Bk. V, p. 406.

[16] The **Morning Star** and **Catholic Messenger**, New Orleans, August 1, 1891, p. 4, column 6.

Very Reverend Basil Moreau, who usually discussed in accents of melting eloquence the love of God and the sweetness and glory of the religious vocation, the blessedness of serving the Master, now wrote to one of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross in Louisiana November 19, 1872 on another subject which he felt would be of interest to those who had solaced his labors in past years:

> I am not dangerously ill yet, and although I have reached my seventy-third birthday, I hope to be able to preach the Lenten sermons in one of the parishes of the Diocese. My old age warns me, however, that I am nearing the end of life, and I long to see God so as never more to offend Him. Ask this grace for me as a final gift. You may count on my paternal devotedness toward you, even to my death.

Father Moreau was asked to preach the Lenten sermons at La Fleche, Vendome, Bailleul. The note-book in which he kept the record of the missions to be preached reads thus: "Maresche, Solemn Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, January 28, eight days preparatory spiritual exercises. At Mont-Saint-Jean, First Communion, Thursday in the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament." A letter was received the day after Father Moreau's death from the pastor of Bailleul remarking, "How much good would come to my parish from the exercises of Holy Week conducted by you, Reverend Father!" But the Divine Master had already measured the task of his good and faithful servant whose co-operation was so ardently sought. Only a moment remained to him in which to exercise that sacerdotal devotedness which for fifty years he had taught to his co-laborers by his example. The time was come when he was to receive the reward of his long years of labor. The new year was to be for him the eternal year.

On January 1, 1873, the Mother General of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, wrote a letter to her spiritual daughters in which she said: "Our Beloved Father realized that he must halt in his laborious course, and in the exercise of his inexhaustible charity. On the eve of this sad event, he had received with his usual cordiality and gaiety the New Year's Greetings from his relatives and from our Community. Then he repaired to the town of Ivre near Mans to call upon the pastor who was ill, and who had requested him to officiate in his Church on New Year's Day, and to speak to his parishoners. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, our Very Reverend Father was attacked with severe internal pains.

Owing to his sufferings he said but a few words to the parishioners and returned to Mans as soon as Mass was over. The doctors commenced treatment that was very painful to our Father who was unaccustomed to a doctor's care. For months previously he had suffered without a word of complaint. During this time he had continued his practice of fast and abstinence three days of the week; nor could he be induced to add anything to his frugal evening collation or to the water which had been his only drink for long years.

"The fourth day of Father Moreau's illness, upon the advice of the doctor and the Chaplain, our Founder consented to be removed from the chair in which he had taken his night's rest for over twenty-five years, and which he said he used that he might jot down the thoughts which came to him during the night. He was removed from his room to one more spacious in which he consented to have a fire. From this time on, Father Moreau resigned himself with perfect obedience to accept all the care of which he was the object. During this holy Christmas season, he thought of the Divine Infant Saviour in the crib and repeated these words of the Psalmist: **'Pannis involutum'** ('wrapped in swaddling clothes') and he added in a spirit of gratitude these words: **'Stratum versasti in infirmitate,'** ('Lord, it is Thou Who hast prepared the bed for Thy sick servant.') As his sufferings increased, the venerable priest strengthened his union with God by frequent ejaculatory prayers. During his last days he never ceased to pray. He was heard to repeat day and night invocations that his retentive memory drew from the lives of the saints or from the liturgy. He habitually had recourse to the Mother of God, from whom he must have received relief and consolation, for he was heard to say: 'How fortunate that I was consecrated to the blessed Virgin Mary.'

"In listening to his prayers, said with such patience and piety, in gazing at the peaceful movement of his lips when his voice was still, one might doubt whether he was fully conscious of the sufferings he was enduring. He held communication with God alone, asking for nothing that would alleviate his sufferings, nor was he ever heard to utter a sigh or a word of complaint. And yet, with expressions of gratitude he received the services proffered him by the Sister Infirmarian. With eagerness, in his most painful moments, he extended his hand to our Father Chaplain when he heard his voice. Then with his usual fervor, he continued to pray, his union with God being uninterrupted except in rare moments of drowsiness.

"Our Reverend Father, although accustomed for so many years and in so many ways to a life of entire detachment, still entertained hope of continuing his apostolic labors. At the beginning of his illness he had us write to a certain pastor that his condition would not permit him to open a mission scheduled for the nineteenth of January. Then, fearing that his absence would greatly embarrass the pastor in question, he informed him several days later that as his health seemed to be improved he earnestly hoped to keep his engagement. Notwithstanding his extreme weakness he entertained the hope of celebrating, or at least of assisting at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. In the meantime he expressed a wish to receive Holy Communion in his room. Though exceedingly weak, he wished to rise from his bed that he might more humbly testify his faith in the Blessed Eucharist and his devotion to Our Lord. Not being able to kneel, he was heard to exclaim one morning before receiving Holy Communion: 'Thou knowest, O my God, that at this solemn moment my soul obeys my body. Were I not incapacitated by sickness, I would not receive Thy visit in this chair, but on my knees in deepest humility. At least, O my Divine Saviour, I unite the ardent desires of my heart to the adoration of the angels and the homage which the saints under similar circumstances offered Thy Divine Majesty. **'Jesu, quem velatum nunc aspicio, oro, fiat illud quod tam sitio, ut te revelata cernens facie visu sim beatus tuae gloriae.'** After having communicated he said, **'Deo Gratias,'** then he commenced the **Te Deum.**

"A few days after the seventeenth of January, the feast of his patron Saint Anthony, the venerable patient fully realizing his nearness to eternity received the last rites of the Church. In the evening of the same day, I requested the Chaplain to assemble all the Community around the person of our beloved Father, and to ask him for each and everyone of us the favor of a last blessing. As soon as he had acceded to our request, we knelt around his bed and the Chaplain, speaking in the name of the Community said: 'Dearly Beloved Father, your spiritual Daughters to whom you have given the religious life, come to offer you their filial sympathy and the assurance of their eternal gratitude for all the favors they have received from your devotedness and your example. They are kneeling to ask your blessing as Founder and as Father, promising you the help of their prayers and an inviolable fidelity to the Rule which you have given them.' 'Yes, with all my heart,' answered Father Founder. 'May God bless you by my hand, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' He was requested to bless the entire Congregation of the Marianite Sisters. 'Yes, to one and all,' repeated Father Founder, 'I send my blessing, benediction, absolution, and all that I can give.'

"Our venerable patient received Extreme Unction the following morning, and in the evening the Apostolic Benediction with the Plenary Indulgence. Sunday, the nineteenth of January, was for us a day of sad anxiety. I spent the day in his room with our Chaplain and with three of our Sisters. Towards morning his breathing became labored, and at half past nine death seemed approaching. He was not in agony but in a state of drowsiness during which he did not lose all consciousness and appeared to hear the voice that recommended his soul to Jesus, to Mary His Mother, to St. Joseph, to the Holy Angels and to all his celestial protectors, particularly to his baptismal patron and to those saints whose intercession he always invoked in his missionary work, as well in that of his foundations, such as Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Alphonsus Liguori, and Saint Ignatius. At half past twelve we could hardly hear his breathing. At the same time it was remarked that the noble and ascetic countenance of our Father shone with calm and serene beauty. His soul seemed to light up more than ever the majestic forehead which it animated. Then the Chaplain pronounced a last blessing over our dying Father whom our tears could not hold back; and as he expired the Chaplain gave him the kiss of eternal peace.

"The funeral services of the Venerable deceased were held in the Chapel of the Mother House Wednesday, January 33. Whilst the body lay in state, six of our Sisters kept vigil day and night around it. During those days, the gratitude and the veneration of the people were shown by the frequent visits made by crowds from every class of society, who prayed and touched our Founder's remains with their beads and other articles of devotion, which they cherished as precious relics. This manifestation of confidence in the holiness of our Venerable Founder continued throughout the funeral Mass. Many obtained access to the coffin while it was still open, by pressing through the crowds which filled the sanctuary to overflowing. Our Venerable Father, lying in his sacerdotal robes, attracted all by his expression of peace and prayer. His last sleep seemed to have removed from his countenance all trace of labor and austerity. The parish priest celebrated the Holy Sacrifice and gave the absolution. The Dean of the Chapter carried the candle of honor. At the head of the funeral procession, the clergy were represented by several Canons from the Diocese, and by all the Superiors of the different Religious Societies of Mans. After the near relatives came the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, a delegation from the Good Shepherd Monastery and from other Congregations. The procession was closed by a very large number of former students and friends. The dominant note of this vast assembly was inspired by the triple sentiment of veneration, gratitude, and sympathy, for a priest of noble character and heroic virtue."[17]

An artist who sketched a photograph of the Founder within recent years from an old one remarked, "This man died of a broken heart!" Recalling the sentiments of affection displayed during Father Moreau's visit to America in 1857, the events that followed, including not only the loss of his precious church, **Our Lady of Holy Cross,**[18] but also the loss of the province of Indiana, and this under the impetus given by his beloved confrere, Father Edward Sorin, C.S.C., one realizes Father Moreau's heart must have indeed been torn apart.

> As many of the old orders of the Church in their beginnings were torn by trouble from within as well as from without, so the congregation of Father Moreau had its "dark night of the soul." In the late sixties came the separation of the Indiana province from the mother house in France.[19]
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> In 1857 Father Moreau on his visit to America had promulgated the decree of Rome in regard to the severance of the Sisters from the other two elements in the society, the priests and Brothers. This readjustment was slowly made. In 1862 Bishop Luers of Fort Wayne in the name of the Sisters sent a petition to Rome asking the approval of the American community as a distinct organization and the appointment of an American bishop as apostolic visitor. New Constitutions written by Father Sorin for the Indiana province were submitted for approbation. At first the Church refused these requests, owing to many conflicting statements which had been received at Rome in regard to the whole situation. But the resignation of Father Moreau in 1866 and the subsequent election of Father Sorin as superior general were followed in 1869 by the recognition of the Sisters of the Holy Cross as a distinct order from the Marianites with their mother house in America. Father Sorin was again made their ecclesiastical superior, a position he held until the apostolic approbation of their Constitution in 1889.[20]
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> The severance of the Indiana branch from the parent tree in 1869, and the Canadian branch in 1882, though a natural outcome of growth and division, was painful to Mother Seven Dolors, whose loving heart had nurtured them from infancy.

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[17] The Last Moments of Very Reverend Basil Moreau—Typed copy from Le Mans Mother House. Archives of New Orleans Provincial House.

[18] This church was lost through auction because of a debt incurred by one of the members of Holy Cross, **Supra** p. 8.

[19] **Our Mother House,** IV, p. 62, **Centenary Chronicles** of the Sisters of Holy Cross, Holy Cross, Indiana.

[2] **History of Our Mother House,** IV, 62-63, **Centenary Chronicles,** Sisters of the Holy Cross, Indiana, 1941.

> She felt as any mother feels when she realizes that her children have outgrown her maternal arms and choose to stand on their own feet. This separation severed the official connection of the American communities with Mother Seven Dolors, yet her adopted children never ceased to ask her counsel, and to this day venerate her memory with filial affection. Their first superior from 1841 until 1857, their Mother General until the separation from France, their intercessor until eternity begins, all these and more was Mother Seven Dolors.[21]

This great servant of God needs no tribute from a feeble pen; his works remain, and are a living, glorious monument which will perpetuate his memory as the ages move on till time will be no more. His works in the service of the Church, and for the promotion of religion and education, as well as for the alleviation of the destitute poor, attest that Father Moreau was a man of great holiness, ardent zeal and profound humility.[22]

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[21] **Superiors General**, II. p. 36, **Centenary Chronicles**, Sisters of the Holy Cross, Indiana, 1941

[22] L'Abbe Moreau, **Morning Star and Catholic Messenger**, August 1, 1891—Fiftieth Anniversary of the Community's foundation in Le Mans, p. 4, column 6

CHAPTER TWO

WITHIN THE SHADE OF THE CROSS

UNTIL 1838 the Brothers attended to the domestic duties of the college of Our Lady of Holy Cross, but their services were needed for teaching, so a few pious women agreed to take over the management of the kitchen, laundry, and infirmary work of the establishment. Observing how successfully their work complemented that of the Priests and Brothers, Father Moreau was inspired to found an order of women.

Although the date generally quoted for the foundation of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross is August 4, 1841, the novitiate is said to have been duly organized on February 19, 1939.

In accordance with the ruling of the Church that a new Congregation must begin its religious training under the direction and under the shelter of another already approved, the candidates were placed under the supervision of Mother Mary Dositheus, Superior of the Le Mans Good Shepherd Convent, in which Father Moreau had a Founder's interest. Kind, hospitable shelter together with a mother's loving care and wise religious direction were offered the brave Leonie Chopin and Renee Beuteilleur who were the first postulants to offer themselves at **Sainte Croix** in April, 1841. Their noble example was soon followed by Marie Robineau. These served as a nucleus for the future community.

As yet, no Sister capable of governing this infant community had presented herself to the Founder. Prayers were incessantly offered to God that in His Providence He might send them a subject with the capacity for mothering and directing them. Their prayers were answered when the brave and generous Mademoiselle Leocadie Gascoin of Montenay asked admittance to Holy Cross.

Leocadie-Romaine Gascoin was born on the first day of March, 1818, at Montenay, Department of Mayenne, France. She became a child of God by Baptism on the day of her birth. In the eternal designs of Providence, she was destined to become the worthy and devoted co-laborer of Very Reverend Basil Anthony Mary Moreau in the blessed work of building up the infant community of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross.

As a young girl, Leocadie Gascoin had always nursed the idea of becoming a cloistered religious until the Cure d'Ars pointed the way by prophesying that her vocation was to be a religious at the foot of the cross. At the same time he did not tell her how this was to be accomplished. When Very Reverend Father Moreau had the project of the Institute of the Marianites in mind, Leocadie had gone to the convent of the Good Shepherd in Le Mans to make a retreat in order to gain light as to which religious community she should enter. It was by an impulse of grace, and not by natural inclination, that she left her home in Montenay, where her honorable and Christian family resided. During these pious exercises of the retreat, Very Reverend Father Moreau directed her, and as he was in need of "the first stones for the foundation of his work,"[1] finding in Leocadie the necessary spirit of faith, generosity and strength of character to accomplish great things, he asked her cooperation for the execution of his designs.

Leocadie Gascoin immediately entered as a Marianite postulant the Good Shepherd Convent to receive the same experienced direction of the saintly Mother Mary of Saint Dositheus as that of her predecessors. With three companions, she received the holy habit August 4, 1841. The habit, though modified at a later date,[2] included from the very beginning the Seven Dolor Beads and the silver heart of Our Lady transpierced by seven swords. Names consonant with the title of the Order's Patroness, Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, were given by Very Reverend Father Moreau: Leonie Chopin received the name of Sister Mary of Holy Cross; Renee Bouteilleur, Sister Mary of Compassion; Marie Robineau, Sister Mary of Calvary; and Leocadie Gascoin, Sister Mary of the Seven Dolors.

Mother Mary of Saint Dositheus devoted herself untiringly to the formation of these first Marianites of Holy Cross. They also had for their spiritual director the Founder himself.

At the end of their novitiate, Reverend Father Moreau desired their assistance for the reopening of the boarding department of Our Lady of Holy Cross. Great was the Sisters' grief at the thought of parting from Mother Mary of Saint Dositheus. The good Superioress, as a true foster-mother, recalled to their minds the dedication of their community to the heart of Mary pierced with the sword of grief, thus consoling and encouraging them to accept this first sacrifice.

At Our Lady of Holy Cross, Sister Mary of the Seven Dolors became Father Moreau's assistant and the directress of the little band. The Holy Spirit was conducting her to a mysterious end. He inspired her with confidence to obey blindly this man of God, in manual work at the College of Holy Cross, then in the process of formation, finally in the material organization of the new community of Marianites destined to become, through her devotedness, a new family of Holy Mother Church.

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[1] Circular Letter 225 from Le Mans Mother House, January 15, 1918.

[2] See page 41 ff.

How satisfying it was to Sister Mary of the Seven Dolors, who had made the apprenticeship of the hidden life behind the walls of the Good Shepherd convent, to direct her companions' humble employment in the farmyard, the laundry, the clothes room or the infirmary of Holy Cross. But the pleasure of tranquillity felt in this secluded, humble work was not to be hers for long! During the first years they lived at some distance from the College, near the Visitation Convent, and in passing back and forth from their work had to bear the not always silent contempt of the unsympathetic elements among the citizenry. Father Moreau was aware of these trials, and strove with his own characteristic fortitude to encourage them. "Have courage," he told them on one such occasion. "It will not rain pitchforks, and if it should, continue just the same."[3]

The Founder observing how well the triune group—the Fathers, the Brothers, and the Sisters—complemented one another's work, envisioned in them the unity of the Holy Family. Thus he consecrated the Auxiliary Priests to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Pastor of Souls; the Brothers to the Heart of Saint Joseph, their Patron; and the Marianite Sisters to the Heart of Mary pierced with the sword of grief.[4] Thus, from the very beginning of their training, Marianites are taught to invoke, "Saint Joseph, pray for us" at the hour of one; "Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us" at the hour of two; and "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us," at the hour of three—a custom reminiscent of the early unity of the three branches of Holy Cross.

Our Lady of Holy Cross, the cradle of the community, became for the Marianites a second Nazareth. The cross, to be sure, cast its shadow across its portals; nevertheless, the joy of the Founder was great as he beheld their poverty and obedience. He would sit in his arm-chair, while his daughters gathered around him for an intimate family conference. Looking around at the group of eager faces, he would give them, in his admirable way, the principles of religious life. Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors summarized these conferences in her own handwriting:

> Father urged us to think of the picture of Our Lady of Sorrows that we wear on our breast; to remember that we are her

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[3] Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 94; cf. Circular Letter 134 from le Mans Mother House.
[4] Ibid., p. 98.

> daughters, and hence should imitate her virtues. He added that if we wish our little community to prosper, we must not allow ourselves to be depressed by adversity and that we must be very obedient in imitation of our Blessed Mother . . . . Father said we must always be like a united little family, notwithstanding the differences that may exist between characters, and that we must obey faithfully the one who occupies the place of superior.[5]

Heaven set its seal upon the projects of Reverend Father Moreau when the Papal Nuncio at Paris, Monsignor Fornari, approved them. With this approval of the local representative of the Vicar of Christ, the Marianites started their life as a religious community. Though from their very earliest days at Le Mans, the Sisters were called Marianites, the title of their Community was first designated as the Congregation of the Seven Dolors.[6] In 1846 they were recognized as part of the civil corporation of the three Holy Cross groups—Priests, Brothers, and Sisters—known as the Association of Holy Cross. This entitled them to all the rights and privileges of the Priests and Brothers, including that of contributing their own funds to the general treasury.

In his simple, familiar way, the Founder in another conference tells them what seems to him to be the aim of their community:

> The Marianites are to aim only at Heaven, to seek God in all things, to aspire to the happiness of possessing Jesus, of belonging only to Him, and to His Blessed Mother, making use of all their interests, rights, or goods for the sole honor of their Divine Master and the salvation of souls.[7]
>
> They are to lead a life of abnegation in all employments and exercises, never acting save by the will of a superior; a life regular and exact by constant and universal fidelity to the Constitutions and the Rules of the Society.[8]

That Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, Father Moreau's assistant, caught the spirit that animated the saintly Founder can be seen in her instructions to her daughters during these formative years:

> The crown awaits us, but it will cost dear. Let us not shirk; death will arrive soon, and then what a happiness shall we experience for having renounced and conquered ourselves.[9]

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[5] **Superior Generals**, II, p. 19 Centenary Chronicles of the Sisters of the Holy Cros., Holy Cross, Indiana.

[6] Marianite Chronicles, New Orleans, p. 2.

[7-8] **Idem**. p. 8.

[9] **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors**, revealed to her daughters through her correspondence, p——.

MOTHER MARY OF THE SEVEN DOLORS

(Leocadie Gascoin)
First Superior General of the Marianite Sisters
of Holy Cross

In her life as a religious of Holy Cross, Mother never permitted trials, sorrows, disappointments, even failures at times, to swerve her from her firm determination to keep within the path traced out by Divine Providence for her, the royal road of the cross. There is also visible in this the fulfillment of her one desire as a religious: "I wish," she said, "to know nothing other than Jesus Crucified and His Sorrowful Mother." How well she knew both, Jesus and His Mother, it is easy to glean from her long and beautiful life the little splinters of the cross she unknowingly let fall as she trod the dolorous path up to Calvary's heights. And this she did with a love and resignation known only to a privileged few.[10]

Although Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors had been placed at their head, and her daughters, even in those early days of her religious life, progressed under her direction, there were occasions when the Founder would send these novices for more mature guidance from the venerable Mother Mary of Saint Dositheus, thus supplementing his training and that of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors. In this way Mother Mary of Saint Dositheus was responsible for the training of the first twenty-five Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. After Mother Mary of Saint Dositheus' death in 1845, the Founder, according to the provisional Constitutions, convoked a general assembly of the Sisters in order to elect a Superior. The election of Sister Mary of the Seven Dolors was unanimous:

> The Sisters placed Mother Seven Dolors at their head to make her that burning lamp which, placed on a height, lights all those who are in the house. They proposed her to her Sisters as a perfect model, as a book always open where each might learn her religious obligations. Their expectation was fulfilled. The new superior, the personification of the rule, commanded and led more by example than by word, realizing full well that "if the way be long by precept, it is short and efficacious by example." One found her first at all the exercises of the day, and her Sisters could not but admire her goodness, her prudence, her discretion, her respect for priests, especially for the Very Reverend Father Founder, whom she obeyed constantly with a simplicity quite religious.[11]

As a mother, whose duty it was to conduct to heaven the souls confided to her care, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors pointed out the way to her religious; but first she explored it herself, in order to know its difficulties, its illusions, and its facilities in order to make them known to those whom she had to guide:

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[10] Tribute to Mother Foundress given at the unveiling of her picture at the Indiana Centennial August, 1941, by Sister Mary of St. Aloysius, M. de S.C.

[11] **Superiors General**, II, Centenary Chronicles, Sisters of the Holy Cross, Holy Cross, Indiana, p. 21.

> Ah! come with me to the foot of the cross; let us be there near to our desolate Mary, and like her let us lovingly kiss that cross which Jesus has carried, and of which He wishes to give us a small part . . . . In one way or another, we must bear the cross and follow Jesus by suffering and renouncement; the road is easy when peace reigns within. . . . My beloved daughters, consider yourselves happy to live on the cross of Jesus Christ and in its spirit. . . . The cross! ah, the cross! Come what may, we must bear it, and it is even more heavy for the cowardly souls. . . .[12]

Again, she is teaching this way of the cross to the novice, making it clear to the young religious and to those who would follow them that the cross is the sign of salvation, and that suffering is the way traced out by Jesus Christ, Himself, Who first passed over that path. The Foundress reminds the novice;

> It is a much heavier cross for the faint-hearted ones than for the fervent and generous. Embrace it. Do not reject it, for it will follow you everywhere, every day. How light is the cross for the simple and obedient soul.[13]

Significant, indeed, is her letter, preserved in the New Orleans Archives, which was written to Sister Mary Xavier (Haggerty) of the Louisiana province upon the occasion of her reception of the Holy Habit in 1894:

> Daughter, you will have to carry sooner or later, the crosses which our dear good Master reserves for His most faithful servants. Have no fear, my child, in proportion He gives His powerful grace that we may follow Him to the summit of Calvary.

To the novices wise counsel of the following type proved helpful to them in avoiding too sensible and natural attachments to creatures:

> Avoid the satisfying of your natural feelings. Give to Jesus, the Spouse of your soul, all your love and your whole heart, of which He is so jealous and with good right. In the way of perfection on which you wish to enter, do not arrest your progress to fix your attention on creatures, whoever or whatever they may

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[12] The Sipirt of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, p. 22.
[13] The Spirit of Mother Seven Dolors (Canadian edition) Letter 37 p. 160.

> be. Your star is Jesus-Mary-Joseph; look to them, and in them see all those who are dear to you.[14]

Knowing the burden of superiorship, Mother wished to place before her Sisters the proper respect for authority, which is effected by the light of faith, and at the same time she sought to lighten the burden of those upon whom the office of superior had been laid:

> Be docile to all authority and respect it always according to the spirit of faith. . . . Have but one heart and one soul, even one will, that of the superior. . . . My dear daughters, a religious should always deem herself fortunate to be governed by any superior whatever, provided she be legitimately elected. Then she is the representative of God for her subjects, and it is He Whom we ought to thank for all things, even when the choice is not, naturally, according to our taste. It is impossible, according to nature, for any superior to please everybody. It is necessary, however, to respect her. The only way to show our respect and submission to a superior is to prove it on every occasion by our conduct, our fidelity to the **superior**[15] **of superiors**, that is to say, to the Rule in all its points.

How it must have gladdened the Founder's heart to see his daughters growing in the true spirit of their vocation under the constant promptings of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors. Quietly she drew around them the bulwark of their Rules by insisting upon their observance. To a religious she writes:

> You wish to be a saint? I congratulate you. But you will never be one without the constant and generous practice of your rules and constitutions.[16]

"Teach your novices," she counsels the Mistress, "the eminently practical science of love and respect for the rule, which is synonymous with sanctity.[17]

In Father Moreau's letter of January 23, 1858, addressed to the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, the Founder says:

> Your sanctification, your perfection, depend entirely on the observance of your vows and rules, which are the expression of God's will in your regard. The best, or rather, the only way you have of pleasing God and of doing His will is to imbue yourselves with your rules, to practice them.

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[14] **Idem**, pp. 154-155.

[15] **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors**, (French edition, Saint Laurent, Canada, 1937.), pp. 112, 113.

[16] **Idem**, p. 108, Letter 103 to the Professed Religious.

[17] Letter 6, **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors**, p. 139.

It was not surprising that under such a master as the Founder, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors learned to speak to her Sisters of the things of God in terms akin to his. Her Sisters remarked that "She spoke as the Father Founder, with the same force, conviction, simplicity, and unction."

> Ah! how happy we should be in the bosom of Religion if we would desist from seeking ourselves to follow only the will of God, which is always made known to us, either by our rules and constitutions, or by our religious superiors, or by the events of life. . . . My daughter, believe me, what I desire for you, as well as for myself, is the study and the perfect understanding of our rules. They will be the subject-matter of our judgment at death. Yes, it will be on our fidelity in practicing them that we shall be judged. Our duties as Christians and as religious are traced in them. Our rule is the superior of us all, and we are what we are by our rule alone.[18]

This development of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors' religious life extended over fifty years; the counsels interpreted here were scattered through her letters to her daughters over that span of time. The crosses of which she speaks so intimatelly were met in the first years of her religious life. Even as the saintly Mother Madeleine Sophie Barat[19] had had to suffer the parting with her beloved daughter, the saintly Mother Duchesne, when she sent her to the wilds of America, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors suffred the separation from her first companions at an early date.

Only two years had Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors and her Sisters been working together, when the Founder returned one day to Our Lady of Holy Cross bearing a letter from the colony of Fathers and Brothers he had sent to Indiana in August, 1841.

As the Marianites grouped themselves about him, Father Moreau read to them Father Edward Sorin's request that in the next contingent of Priests and Brothers several Marianite Sisters be included. They were needed for the domestic work at Notre Dame, Indiana. The Sisters listened in amazement, wondering as the Apostles of old, "Is it I, Lord" who shall be sent to these foreign shores? Full well they realized that the laborers were few in face of the harvest that was whitening on every side! Yet, how boundless was their good will. Every fresh field that would open to them in the future would find them ready for the service with its increased toil and difficulties. Their energies were now to reach out to America. After a slight two years religious formation, these novices were to be sent to the wilderness which was then the state of Indiana. Only an additional year would elapse when these novices, separated from Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors by three thousand miles, the stretch of the Atlantic ocean, would have to pronounce in their mission cabin in America their vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. At Le Mans, France, on the morning of September 15, 1844, in union with these dear Sisters in America, without any ceremony, kneeling in the presence of Very Reverend Basil Moreau, who held the Sacred Host in his hands, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors consecrated her entire life to her Celestial Spouse, Who had called her as well as these three dear companions to follow Him on the road of obedience and sacrifice.

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[18] Letter 108, Idem, p. 112.

[19] Foundress of the Religious of the Sacred Heart.

[20] Builder of the Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana.

The tree of the Cross, which Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors had helped the founder plant, was sinking its roots deeply, and as in nature the tree that stands most securely in the earth lifts loftiest head to heaven, so it is with the life of religious communities. The tree was to be transplanted to other soil. Within five years this expansion of the work of Holy Cross was to cost the founder his greatest sacrifice:

> Never my dear daughter in Jesus Christ, never has my devotion to the work of Holy Cross cost me so much as when it becomes necessary to consent to your departure. You do not wish it; neither do I. Our sacrifice is then the more meritorious. Be assured that I will shorten the time of your sojourn in so far as that depends on me, and if you cannot return next year or the year following, I will, please God, visit you. In the meanwhile, keep me informed of all your difficulties and of all your consolations, and count on my constant esteem, affection, and confidence. Assure my daughters of my lively interest and of my attachment, so long as they remain submissive and devoted to you.

In imitation of the Master Who hesitated not to draw women into His apostolate, the founder had drawn to the fold of Holy Cross these devoted co-workers. Knowing that the tenderness of a woman's care would be needed in many of the institutions founded or to be founded by the Congregation of Holy Cross, Very Reverend Father Moreau had given women a share in the sowing. He would now give them a share in the reaping.

Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors' daughters would soon have need of the counsel she had given them. Opposition to them was soon evident, and from no less a personage than the Bishop of

Le Mans, Monsignor Bouvier. His Lordship told Father Moreau when he wished to give the Marianites a fuller and more intellectual mission than that of household duties: "See that your sisters are pious girls, solely destined to household work and I shall have nothing to find fault with, provided all necessary precautions stated by the rule are kept."[21]

Bishop Bouvier had two teaching orders within the limits of his diocese, and thought that a third one was unnecessary. This thwarting of his designs was a thorn in the side of Father Moreau, who sought to complement the work of his Priests and Brothers (that of Christian education) with that of his sisters. He wished his sisters to give themselves likewise to the formation of the hearts of the youth who might be entrused to their care. Aiming, however, to become more and more conformable to the humble obedience of his Divine Master, Father Moreau bowed in submission to the wishes of his bishop, hearing in his command the voice of the Divine Shepherd.

Great was the Founder's great joy when His Holiness, Pope Pius IX, ordered him to change this purpose of the Sisters to that of the education of youth, saying: "Society is too much in need of education. Train your spiritual daughters to become educators of youth." Always a loving and obedient son of the Supreme Pontiff, Reverend Father Moreau acceded to His Holiness' wishes. Thus there was written into the Constitutions the correction, that though these pious girls were to devote themselves to the household work of various establishments directed by the Priests in France, abroad they were to apply themselves to education.[22]

Consumed with the desire for missionary endeavors himself, the Founder could not turn a deaf ear to America's plea any longer. The prophetic words of the Cure d'Ars were soon to be realized. The Tree of the Cross was to extend one of its branches to America.

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[21] Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 96 quoting from the General Archives, Congregation of Holy Cross.
[22] Fitzgerald, op. cit., p. 97.

CHAPTER THREE

IN THE ARDOR OF SACRIFICE

THE ARDOR of sacrifice, which consumed the heart of Father Moreau, was to be found also in the first Marianites, and with great eagerness they longed to carry the cross, the emblem of salvation, to America.

In his letter of December 5, 1842, Reverend Edward Sorin, C.S.C., had mentioned to Reverend Father Moreau that "the Sisters' presence is so much desired here. They must be prepared, not merely for domestic work, but also for teaching."[1] This he reiterated in a later letter, reminding Father Moreau that he had promised three Sisters to the American colony. The departure ceremony took place in May, 1843:

> One bright May morning, a little company of four Sisters, Sister Mary of Calvary, Sister Mary of Bethlehem, Sister Mary of Nazareth, and Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, set out from Le Mans to join the Holy Cross colony in the New World. As the stagecoach drove away, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors whispered to them a last word of counsel. Sister Cenacle waved good-bye with a rather forlorn smile as she would have liked to go with them. Sister Compassion pressed into Sister Mary of Calvary's hands a little statue of the Blessed Mother, saying confidently, "She will take care of you."[2]

The trip from Le Mans to Havre took three days. There they were met by Father Moreau who procured wood and with his own hands built a little compartment for the Sisters in the stern of the vessel, their "cloister," Sister Mary of Calvary called it.

On June third, as the ship sailed away, the founder tenderly blessed these Holy Cross missionaries, four Sisters, one Brother and four priests, setting out to win souls for Christ in America.[1] Father Coinete, in a letter to France, describes the storm they endured after monotonous days and weeks of fatigue and hardship:

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[1] Sister M. Rita, C.S.C., **A Story of Fifty Years** (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1855-1905), p. 20.

[2] **Our Mother House,** IV, Centenary Chronicles of the Sisters of Holy Cross, Notre Dame, Indiana, p. 17.

[3] Our Mother House, IV, Sisters of Holy Cross, p. 17.

> For three days and nights we thought ourselves between life and death. Everything helped to throw us into terror; the piercing cries of the sailors, which we regarded as announcements of shipwreck, the roaring of the waves, and the cracking of the ship. Sometimes we found ourselves, fixed as it were, on the side of a mountain, in such a way that we could hardly stand and that a thousand objects rolled in the ship with a terrible crash. How many times in this moment of crisis we thought of Holy Cross![4]

There were forty long days at sea, with the wind always against them. They finally reached Notre Dame in July. "The oblation that had begun at Le Mans was completed at Notre Dame."[5]

> The loft of the little log chapel which the Brothers had built the year before was to be their home. In this small room with only one window they dwelt happily for two years with their Lady Poverty. On one side of the sanctuary was an alcove where they heard Mass and received Holy Communion. Brother Timothy brought their meals from the kitchen, though sometimes there was little to eat. But when cold and hungry, the Sisters were cheered by the thought of their Father Founder across the sea, who fasted rigorously many times a week, and lived as a penitent.[6]

These were some of the hardships of frontier Indiana, but the Sisters embraced them in the true spirit of their founder. "Rendering services in a hundred ways, and making their influence felt in creating a home-like atmosphere at Notre Dame, these devoted pioneer Marianites performed incredible labors."[7]

In describing the intense cold they experienced, Father Sorin, C.S.C. wrote to France:

> But though at times the blood does not circulate freely through our members, provided the heart still beats with love for the work of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, what more is needed to make happy the Christian, the religious?[8]

From the very beginning, the Sisters had intimate knowledge of the Cross, and from it gained unparalleled fortitude.

The first American foundation of the Sisters was made at Bertrand, Michigan, six miles north of Notre Dame, in the diocese of Bishop Le Fevre of Detroit, in the year 1844. Father Sorin had first laid his plan for this novitiate of the Marianite Sisters before Bishop C. de la Hailandiere, of the diocese of Vincennes, but His Grace had rejected it under the plea that his impoverished community could not support two religious orders, and that the Sisters of Providence had preceded the Marianites in the Diocese of Vincennes.[9]

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[4] **Idem.**, p. 18.

[5] Rev. Hugh O'Donnell, C.S.C., "A Citadel of Western Culture", in **A College Goes to School**, Holy Cross, Indiana, p. 133.

[6] **Our Mother House**, p. 19.

[7] Sister M. Rita, C.S.C., **op. cit.**, p. 21.

[8] Sister M. Rita, C.S.C., **op. cit.**, p. 21.

Of interest in this age of plenty is the description of the making of the habits for the first postulants at Bertrand:[10]

> There were habits to be made, but material was lacking. There were then no large bolts of serge in the sewing room from which yards of lovely new goods might be cut without the lifting of an eyebrow. It required all the ingenuity of the young Mistress of Novices, Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart, to find enough pieces. These were of various materials of various shades of black, often verging on green. . . . The diary of a young Sister says: "My skirt was of dyed merino, the waist of some other pieces of cloth, the sleeves were manufactured from an old apron, and the cape from an old black shawl.[11]

The habit, too, differed in 1844 from that which is worn by the Marianites today. It is described in the first Rules of the Congregation as a robe made of black serge, with long flowing sleeves. A blue worsted belt, several inches wide, fastened at the side; from it was suspended a chaplet of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors. The headdress consisted of a small linen cap, a band across the forehead, an outer cap with a narrow fluted ruffle which fitted close to the face. The veil was of black delaine, a long piece doubled, and fastened together in folds at the back of the head. The Sisters wore a black apron, the bib partially covering the guimpe, which was very much like the neckerchief now in use. The silver heart was not surmounted by a cross but had a hook on the under side by which it was attached to a piece of worsted blue braid worn around the neck. When approaching Holy Communion, the Sisters wore a long cloak of coarse French serge. These cloaks are in use still for the pupose of a winter wrap, but they are no longer used for their original purpose. The red mantles worn by the Sisters during the community Hour of Adoration were later discarded.

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[9] **Our Mother House**, Centenary Chronicles of the Sisters of Holy Cross, (Holy Cross, Indiana) p. 20.

[10] **Idem.**, p. 21.

[11] **Our Mother House**, p. 21.

[12] Cf. also in **Our Mother House**, pp.131, 132.

In 1850 the General Council at Le Mans decided that the circular veil should be adopted. On March 19, 1854 the Sisters put on for the first time white fluted caps, veils and collars. The cap was smaller and worn closer to the face. The veil now became a constant part of the habit. A chaplet of brass, bearing a crucifix replaced the corded beads and wooden cross worn formerly. The silver heart, the blue girdle, and the black veil are the insignia of religious profession.[13]

Link by link the chain that united the pioneer missionary Marianites of Holy Cross was forged. The spirit that welded them together was that of their venerated Founder, who in giving his daughters their rule of life had said:

> You will cherish them as the protecting light of your virtue, as a firm support and unfailing beacon for your wavering footsteps; as a link which will unite you to each other by subjecting you to one and the same authority as the unmistakable expression of the Divine Will in your regard; as the surest and easiest means of expiating your faults and of attaining the perfection of your sublime state. Thus while esteeming all other religious far superior to yourselves, you will, like them, have your own form and character, and, as it were, a peculiar physiognomy which will distinguish the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. Your life will be hidden in God with Jesus Christ, Who has promised to this heroic self-denial a hundredfold reward in this world and eternal life in the next.[14]

In successive years the Sisters founded missions at Pokagon, Michigan, and Holy Angels Academy in Mishawaka. Many other houses were opened, and by 1848 the Marianites were missioned in Lebanon, Kentucky, at Saint Mary's College, formerly directed by secular priests, which the Congregation of Holy Cross had taken over. Those who had charge of the temporal upkeep of the College there were Sister Mary of the Five Wounds; Sister Mary of the Nativity; Sister Mary of Calvary; and Sister Mary of the Crucifixion. These, with the exception of Sister Mary of the Crucifixion, were the Sisters who were sent to New Orleans, Louisiana, when Archbishop Antoine Blanc requested **Sisters to help** the Brothers of Holy Cross conduct an orphanage.[16]

Reverend Father Drouelle, C.S.C., during his visit to America, had seen the Archbishop and had made all the necessary arrangements for a foundation. The above-named Sisters, with the exception of

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[13] **Chronicles** of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, New Orleans Provincial House.
[14] Archives, New Orleans Provincial House—Letter from Very Reverend Basil Moreau.
[15] **Chronicles**, Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, New Orleans, pp. 9-10.

Sister Mary of the Crucifixion, who returned to the Indiana province, left for New Orleans. Each was to fulfill the obedience with which she had been charged at Lebanon.

When the six Brothers and these three Sisters arrived at the Saint Mary's Male Orphanage on May 1, 1849, the actual foundation in New Orleans was established. This building was located in the Third District on Mazant between Casacalvo and Moreau Streets (now Royal and Chartres) an impoverished section of the city. A few old families remained on portions of their former estates, but immigrants and free people of color also resided in that section.[16]

Despite the fact that the Institution was devoid of the simplest necessities and that a Brother had to beg food daily from the city restaurants, the Sisters wrote glowing accounts of Louisiana and its people. They called New Orleans "one of the richest cities of the United States,"[17] and described the nearby plantations of cane, cotton, and corn that they saw on both sides of the Mississippi river; also, the beautiful orange groves, every tree of which was heavily laden with its burden of fruit. They remarked the beauty of the trees with their deep green leaves in mid-winter and white, fragrant blossoms in the Spring; while the Autumn brought no richer ornamentation than its golden fruit. Indeed, so far as beautiful flowers and luscious fruits are concerned, these early Sisters justly compared Louisiana to the Garden of Eden. The chronicler of those early years pays tribute to the people:

> The people of Louisiana are remarkable for their hospitality, courtesy, and refined and amiable manners; but, their distinguishing trait is their spirit of charity which is amply proved by their abundant almsgiving; no matter whence comes the appeal whether from the sister-states or from afar, their hands are ever ready and their purses ever open to succor the afflicted and the needy; above all, the plague-stricken, as in times of epidemics of yellow fever or cholera.[18]

There were few religious orders of women in New Orleans proper. The Ursulines had come in 1727; the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent De Paul, in 1832; the Sisters of Mount Carmel in 1833.

Father Moreau wrote to his daughters in New Orleans words of encouragement which were to fortify them for every suffering and privation that awaited them in Louisiana:

> I have no doubt, my dear sons and daughters in Jesus Christ,

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[16] **Chronicles**, New Orleans Provincial House, p. 10.
[17] **Ibid.**, p. 3.
[18] **Chronicles**, Mrianite Sisters of Holy Cross, New Orleans, p. 3.

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> that if in the different localities in which obedience has placed you, a devastating scourge should compel the authorities to solicit your assistance, you would respond to the appeal with the same eagerness and generosity as did those of your Mother House. You would thus prove to the world that the same blood which flowed in the veins of the martyrs, of zeal and Christian charity, flows also in yours, and that those who are accustomed to die every day to the world and to themselves by the evangelical renunciation know how to face death when the sacrifice of their life would be useful to their brethren.[19]

At St. Mary's' Orphan Boys Asylum, which had been functioning under inefficient administration for fourteen years, the conditions under which the orphans lived were pitiable. In 1835 Reverend Adam Kindelon, a holy Irish priest, had not only given his personal property, acquired by inheritance, to the orphans, but also his very life. During a flood, while saving the orphans from its dangers, Father contracted the disease that proved fatal within a few days. With his death, many problems arose.

The Institute was conducted by a staff of tutors which was replaced by the Brothers of Holy Cross. A secular board, which administered the property, proved so inefficient that the Brothers wished to abandon the work; although they realized that the orphanage had to be kept open because of the frequent epidemics that ravaged New Orleans and left behind them hundreds of fatherless children.[20]

The work of caring for these orphans, inaugurated by Father Kindelon, was shared by the Marianites. The condition of the children was deplorable. As poor little victims of mismanagement, they were without bedsteads or mattresses, and were obliged to sleep on the bare floor. What blankets they had were so worn that they had to be burned. The "clothes-room" consisted of two benches on which was placed the entire wardrobe of the children. The Sisters' poverty was such that were it not for the charity of the Ursuline nuns, who for six months sent them their meals daily, they would probably have died of want.[21]

Help came in the form of donations and charitable assistance first from the noble Ursulines, then from Madame Jourdan and Doctor Mercer, a prominent non-Catholic physician of New Orleans. The manner in which Madame Jourdan was inspired to help the Sisters is noteworthy. While a Sister was on her way to confession one day she met Madame Jourdan who gave her thirty dollars for the orphans. Upon her return to the convent, the Sisters laughingly teased her about her good fortune, and advised her to go to confession every day. Madame Jourdan was not content with this initial gift; she ever afterwards proved herself a great benefactress to the Sisters and to the orphans confided to their care.[22]

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[19] **Chronicles**, M. de S. C., New Orleans, p. 4.
[20] **Chronicles**, M. de S. C., New Orleans, p. 4.
[21] **Idem.**, p. 11.

Distressed at the plight of her charges, Sister Mary of the Five Wounds went from door to door begging for the orphans. The Marianites acquired their first home—a simple residence near the Asylum on Mazant Street—as a result of this alms-seeking. The editor of one of the city's daily papers thus becoming acquainted with their needs, offered his services to create interest in a fair for raising funds. Unaccustomed to American ways, Sister Mary of the Five Wounds sought advice from Abbé Perche as to the advisability of accepting the offer of publicity. "Of course,' the good Abbé advised her, "accept the editor's' assistance. He is a respected citizen." The fair was a success. With this unspectacular beginning, the Marianites were able, through their indomitable will power and courageous pioneer spirit, to establish themselves.

Now, more than ever, the Sisters were to be in need of their Founder's' caution that

> The spirit of sacrifice, which animated all the members of the Association of Holy Cross would become a source of blessings for all, and that prayer alone would sustain them and prove the most efficacious of remedies against epidemics.[23]

Plague-stricken, germ-laden New Orleans confronted them. Slow starvation, horror and anxiety were their companions. Mournful processions wended their way daily towards the cemeteries, business was halted, and the usual gaiety ceased. In a contemporary journal (abbé Roquette's **Catholic Propagator**) New Orleans was described as a Necropolis where death reigned as sovereign. Father Moreau, commenting upon these conditions, wrote to all the houses of the Congregation imploring prayers not only for those who had died during these epidemics but also for the living members of the Community—those whom Obedience would send to this perilous post.[24]

With all school activities suspended during the cholera plague of 1852, the Sisters' daily task was that of visiting the stricken. This epidemic was appalling, but the yellow fever epidemic of 1853 was the worst on record. When these brave religious discovered the poverty and destitution of the plague victims, they volunteered not only to care for them as their nurses but also to become their almoners. In the space of three hours' time, one hundred and fifty dollars was collected for the stricken. Charity is indeed irresistible! Nothing seemed to daunt these women who stand shoulder to shoulder with the most daring pioneers of any time or place.

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[22] **Chronicles**, M. de S. C., New Orleans, p. 11.
[23] **Idem.**, p. 10, quoting from Father Moreau's letter.
[24] **Chronicles**, M. de S. C., New Orleans, p. 49.

The archivist relates the deeds of intrepid nuns unnamed but outstanding for their valor. On their rounds of mercy, the Sisters found the body of a man who had been dead for twenty-four hours. They provided Christian burial for him. A few doors away, they met a more pitiable spectacle, an uncared for infant and its dying mother who needed immediate attention. The infant was baptized and went to God after a few hours. In the next hour five desperately ill girls were discovered. The presence of their intoxicated father increased their sufferings. One of the Sisters hastily seized a broom and drove the man out of the room, threatening to tell Father Moynihan, Pastor of Saints Peter and Paul Church, about him. Evidently Father Moynihan's fame as a chastiser of paternal delinquents had spread, for the Sisters were not again disturbed either by the girls' father or by the neighbors. They quietly undertook the care of the girls.[25]

Three days later this nun again distinguished herself. The bodies of three dead men were found in an attic. Sister calmly walked into a nearby cafe and begged the men drinking there to take the corpses down to the city cart at the door. Through sheer recognition of a will stronger than their own, they obeyed.[26]

Step by step, the Community at New Orleans built an organization that stood the test of plague, fever epidemics, floods, even the destructive elements of a fratricidal war. To the honor of Very Reverend Basil Moreau it stands as a memory of all those who spent themselves within its ranks for the establishment of media of Christian charity.

Until the year 1871 the Sisters and the Brothers shared the care of Saint Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum, but on April 30 of that year the Sisters assumed entire charge. This is indicated in the following extract from the minutes of the Board of Directors' meeting held that day, signed by Thomas Leyton, Secretary:

> On motion of A. Robert, Esquire, amended on motion of Honorable T. W. Collins, and duly seconded, it was resolved: That the proposition of the **Soeurs Marianites de Ste. Croix** this day pre-

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[25] **Chronicles**, M. de S. C., p 53.

[26] **Idem.**

> sented and read, be accepted; and that the said Sisters take charge of the Asylum provisionally on and from the first of May, 1871, and that the Committee already appointed by the Board shall manage the details of a contract with the said Sisters.

The near-half century of work done by the Jesuit Fathers at Saint Mary's Asylum can only be vaguely comprehended by one who reads the chronicles of that Institute. They became associated with Saint Mary's when a vacancy was occasioned by the death of the Chaplain, Reverend Father Chaplin. This vacancy was not immediately filled, so the Sisters had only Sunday Mass in Saint Mary's chapel, and for the week-day Mass they went to the Chapel of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors attached to the Provincial House seven squares away. However, on May 12, 1886, a Jesuit Father was temporarily appointed to fulfill the duties of chaplain at the Asylum. The temporary appointee was succeeded by others until 1932 when Saint Mary's closed its doors, and the last of her boys was transferred to Hope Haven, a new modern home for orphaned and abandoned boys, founded by Reverend P.M.H. Wynhoven during the administration of Archbishop Shaw. Judgment Day alone will reveal the countless kindly noble deeds that Jesuit priests as confessors, catechetical instructors and lovers of God's little ones accomplished at Saint Mary's. A few quotations from the Chronicles[27] of the Asylum will suffice to substantiate this statement:

> March 9, 1890—The Feast of the Superior was celebrated. On the eve of this feast the boys assembled in the study hall to offer their good wishes. Reverend Father Wiedman, S.J. kindly prepared and taught the boys a short dialogue for the occasion, which showed how the Virgin Mary took care of the Child Jesus while journeying through the desert, and all through the years of His boyhood. The orphans gleaned their lesson from the moral pointed out—that Sister, too, was obliged to carry little orphans of Christ in her arms and to care for them even as Mary had cared for Jesus.
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> June 19, 1890—Confirmation was administered at the Jesuit Church. Eighty-nine boys had the happiness of receiving the Holy Ghost. After this ceremony, Father Wiedman, the Chaplain, took the boys into the college yard where a nice luncheon was prepared for them. While they were partaking of it, the Archbishop came, and seemed pleased to see the boys enjoying themselves. His

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[27] Archives, New Orleans Provincial House.

Grace said he was sure that if he gave them their choice they would wish to be confirmed at the Jesuits' as it would afford them an opportunity of enjoying a rare treat. This treat became a custom, and year after year the chronicler mentions "the good lunch and the happy times given the boys by the Jesuits."

October 1899—The Reverend Father Nicolet, S.J., Chaplain of the Asylum, organized the pious Association of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the League of the Apostleship of Prayer.

June 17, 1900—The beautiful Feast of Corpus Christi was celebrated with due solemnity. The chapel was filled to capacity. At half past five a procession was formed in the chapel. The cross bearer and acolytes came first, followed by a band of fifty-four boys in military uniform, next the choristers, then three censer-bearers incensing the Blessed Sacrament borne under a rich canopy by Reverend T. Nicolet, S.J. Father was assisted by Deacon and Sub-Deacon. After wending its way through the spacious grounds, the procession stopped before a repository whose floral decorations consisted of palm trees, cedar boughs, ferns and roses. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament was given here, a salute fired by the military group, and the procession again formed to return to the chapel.

1901—Christmas Day was one of great festivity for the orphans. Kind friends and patrons of the asylum provided a bountiful repast, at which some of the Administrators, the Rector of the Jesuits and the Reverend Father Chaplain presided. Mother Mary of the Desert and the Sisters meanwhile waited on the children, so that each child was well supplied and no one was forgotten. Thus another custom was established.

The Father Rector of the Jesuits always dined with the orphans and made the day a happy one for the boys. The last Jesuit Superior mentioned as guest of honor Christmas Day was Reverend Father Florence Sullivan, S.J., then President of Loyola.[28]

The annual Christmas program—tree, Santa, toys, and candy—was always presided over by the Jesuits, as were the annual picnics. But these good Fathers were not the only friends Saint Mary's possessed. Doctors of New Orleans gave their professional services for years, many covering a quarter century of loving service. Names like those of Doctors William T. O'Reilly, Louis Cognovich, George

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[28] Archives, New Orleans Provincial House. Quoted from the Chronicles, Marianite Sistesr of Holy Cross.

Roeling, Browne Larose, George Taquino, are indelibly engraved in Saint Mary's Annals. Likewise, a lengthy list of Benevolent Ladies, a group that sewed for the orphans, is recorded in Heaven. On February 26, 1900 these ladies celebrated the silver anniversary of their benevolence to the orphans. A little entertainment was given them by the orphans who wished to show their gratitude to their amiable and charitable friends. The program consisted of an opening address, appropriate songs, and the presentation of bouquets of violets by the babies of the nursery. Reverend Father Chaplain gave an address, and closed the prettiest entertainment of the year by giving the group Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Throughout its existence Saint Mary's cared for nine thousand boys. As great and numerous as were the friends of Saint Mary's, none can compare with their best friends, their fostermothers, the religious women who made Saint Mary's Orphan Boys Asylum what it was, a home for thousands of boys, a home revered and loved as witnessed by the devotedness of those who spent time beneath its hallowed roof. It was not, however, until 1940 that one of Saint Mary's boys paid tribute in print to the Sisters when Lil Hickey wrote the chapter, "An Orphan Returns to Saint Mary's," in his book entitled, **Hickey's the Name.**[29]

> St. Mary's Orphanage became my home for several pleasant years, until 1917. Although starting off with the usual disagreeable tasks, due to something or another, perhaps due to even merit, a final promotion to the Sisters' dining room was my reward. This was supposed to be one of the best jobs in the Institution because of the innumerable privileges involved. The nuns were very kind, and few boys were treated as well, even though I always seemed to be in some trivial trouble, either directly responsible, or given credit for it.
>
> In my position I was, comparatively speaking, a privileged character, although the environment obviouslly with its limitations and restrictions, didn't come up to my expectations—so I ran away. When brought back, homesickness was blamed for my departure. Maybe, it was my adolescent idea of adventure, or the premature call of the open road and an irreconcilable wanderlust. The intervening years wrought many changes, Sisters changed or departed to their just reward. Mother Mary Berchmans was among the former, while Sister Mary Joseph (Aylward), **my friend**, is but a cherished memory, God bless her!

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[29] Page 146.

Quietly and informally, but with beautiful ceremonies, and with the most spontaneous and loyal tribute from the grateful hearts of those who owed the best in their lives to her gentle and loving care, was the sixtieth anniversary of Mother Mary of the Desert's profession in the Congregation celebrated August 25, 1907.[30] If the world owes much to its mothers, how much does it not owe to mothers such as this, who give up in early youth home and kindred to mother the motherless, and whose life is one long immolation of all that the world holds dear, in order to give the country better citizens, and the Church, holy ministers . . . . Mother Mary of the Desert had done both. In every walk of life her "boys' distinguished themselves, and "from her ministering care have gone forth into larger fields, recruits to swell the ranks of the priesthood, medical, legal, and musical professions together with those of every trade."[31]

Few of those boys reared by Mother Mary of the Desert failed to attend the ceremonies of that celebration, and from many, for whom circumstances rendered it impossible to attend, came loving messages of gratitude and congratulation. The sixty years spent in the religious life and in the care of the orphaned children were for her a labor of love.

Only from grace found at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ could come the fulfillment of duties such as were Mother Mary of the Desert's. She began her activity in the city at the orphanage when work of that type was not what it is now. The Sisters were entirely dependent upon their own exertions and the charity of those noble benefactors men and women who generously cooperated with them in their work, and who now share in the glorious record of sending forth men who in turn repaid the Church, the city, and the state by their religious, political, and social services.

When the Sisters were not occupied in begging for the orphans, they were engaged in the care of so many helpless little ones. Begging was harder in those days than it is now. There was much worldliness and weakness of faith. When begging for their charges, the Sisters often met with unkindness and indifference from those who should have known better.

In the year 1847 there was a great famine in Ireland when over a million human beings died of want. Numbers of Irish immigrants flocked to New Orleans, and among them were those who were left helpless and dependent upon the Sisters for a home.

Mother Mary of the Desert and her brave Sisters became mothers to these poor little ones, and those of the Irish race shall never forget her heroic work in behalf of their compatriots. For thirty years she was in charge of the Boys' Asylum. During that time many were her struggles. During epidemics of yellow fever and smallpox as physician, nurse, and caterer she ministered to her orphans because the physicians were often too busy to attend the inmates of the Asylum. It was Mother's care to find clothes and food for the four hundred boys under her supervision. God helped her, and crowned her many excellent qualities by inspiring the best men of the city, in recognition of her efforts, to form an auxiliary to help her in her work.

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[30] The Daily Picayune, August 26, 1907.
[31] The Daily Picayune, August 26, 1907.

In the convent, after the religious ceremonies of Mother Mary of the Desert's Jubilee Mass, she was surrounded by her boys, and there was not one who approached her that she failed to remember or for whom she had not some special greeting. Many, too, came with their little children to pay their respects. All had some offering for the orphans who had succeeded them under Mother's care.

With broken hearts, Sister Mary of Saint Ferdinand (McCracken), Sister Mary of St. Olympia (Fielding), Sister Mary of St. Justin (Neubig) and Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans (Quilter) wended their way from the closed doors of Saint Mary's that held memories of happy years spent with God's dearest ones. On August 26, 1931, a few months before Saint Mary's closed, the following summary of activities at the Asylum was forwarded to the contributors of the Community Chest:

> St. Mary s Catholic Orphan Boys' Asylum was established for the relief of Homeless Boys. It has sheltered and cared for nine thousand, one hundred thirty-six (9,136) boys since its establishment. During the present year, it has given forty-five thousand, six hundred seventy days' care, up to September first. It has served one hundred thirty-seven thousand fifty-two meals and sixty-three thousand, nine hundred nine lunches during the past eight months. The average population is one hundred eighty-eight.
>
> The Sister Infirmarian cares for the minor ailments of the boys in our Institution Clinic, but the more serious cases, such as fever, wounds, etc., are attended to by our faithful friend, Doctor George F. Roeling, whose invaluable services to the Institution cannot be too highly praised. It is worthy of note in connection with the general health of the children, that when we had our outing to the park and to Bay Saint Louis, every child in the home was able to go and to enjoy the day's fun to his heart's content.

> The boys also have their eyes, ears, nose, and throat examined by two noted specialists. Some, too, have been given the routine and medical examination while necessary operations have been taken care of by Doctors of the Touro Infirmary and Charity Hospital.
>
> Lessons in Manual Training, Physical Culture, Elocution, and Music are given by competent professors.
>
> The boys of the Sixth Grade and upwards attend Saint Cecilia Parochial School and Holy Cross College.
>
> Nothing remains now but to get a new Home for the boys and our Board of Directors are devising ways and means to do this.
>
> We desire to thank the Community Chest for the substantial assistance given us in the past, and we sincerely hope that the coming Campaign will be a great success.[32]

It was not easy for the veterans of Saint Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum to accept the change made by Monsignor P. M. Wynhoven when he transferred the boys to the home for boys at Hope Haven. For eighty-two years Marianites' energies had reached out to every department of the Asylum even to that of human misery and pain; but when the interests of their charges would be served by the consolidation of all orphan boys upon the farm bought for that purpose, the Sisters found their peace in the expressed will of God. That the boys themselves remember the Sisters' kindly deeds to them is proven whenever contacts with these former boys are made. The white cap of the Marianite Sister is very often hailed with the remark, 'Our Sisters" by those who were beneficiaries of their care.

Among the Acts of Canonical Visitation in the New Orleans Archives was found the report of the saintly Reverend Thomas J. Weldon, C.M. addressed to the Most Reverend John W. Shaw, D.D.:

> In compliance with your direction of March 11, I have today, March 26, made a Canonical Visitation of this house, St. Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum, and am well pleased with what I find as conditions stand here, under the excellent, God-fearing, zealous and motherly Superioress, Sister Mary of Saint John Berchmans (Quilter.) An orderly religious house where rules are kept and exercises well attended, and a splendid family spirit uniting the Sisters with one another and with the Superior.
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> I find no abuse to denounce or to correct. The work is great; seven dormitories with all it implies of varied labors and un-

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[32] Marianite Archives, New Orleans, La.—These notes were transferred from St. Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum.

ceasing cares call for multiplied labor from every Sister independent of the particular work assigned to each as shown on accompanying paper. Cheerfully and willingly these good Sisters multiply themselves, and it looks as if the older ones are more necessary and indispensable than the younger ones. Love for the orphans keeps them young.

The Sisters are decently provided for and have a good spirit. Dispensed here from the Office in common, it is supplied by prayers assigned by authority. They have Vespers in common every Sunday, and recreation in common after supper daily. These Sisters deserve every possible support to lighten their work and to encourage their zeal.

Commemorative of the priceless work done during the four-score years spent by the Sisters in the Boys Home is the following poem composed in honor of Sister Mary of Saint Ferdinand (McCracken's) years spent in St. Mary's Nursery:

FIFTY GOLDEN YEARS

We will here a tale unfold
That sounds like fairy fables,
Of fifty years of purest gold
Wrought from lowly labors,
All the dust and stone and dross
Have been burned and purified
On the anvil of the cross,
Where pure love is sanctified.

Human hearts need human love
To buoy them up to higher things,
Like the vine that mounts above
To brick and mortar fondly clings.
What has made these fifty years
Like golden rungs ascending?
'Twas orphans' love and orphans' tears
With Christ's in your heart blending.

Saint Mary's orphan babies knew
A mother s gentle hand,
And strong in love and virtue grew
Mothered by Sister Ferdinand.
Twelve long years they came and went
And grew in health and grace,
They found this mother Heaven-sent
To take their mother's place.

Oh, lowly life, oh, holy love,
How will the Master pay
With golden crown in heaven above
Your long life's golden day?
We know the orphan babies' love,
And the school child's tender soul
Will form your crown in Heaven above
Your soul's Eternal Goal!

Those who were trained by Mother Mary of the Desert and her able successors, Sisters Mary of St. Albina, Mary of St. Robert, and Mary of St. Justin, Mary of St. Olympia, and Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans, have not been ashamed of being one of Saint Mary"s "boys."

Father Moreau voiced the opinion that he felt that even if his spiritual daughters were to experience the various trials of worthy religious they would know how to draw from these fruits of the tree of the Cross the sap of eternal life. The Sisters, in their contact with these veteran members who spent themselves for the orphans, know how to draw from their spirit of self-sacrifice and self-renunciation a fresh stimulus for the arduous task of teaching, which Archbishop John J. Glennon of Saint Louis once styled as "a work which requires greater self-sacrifice and higher consecration of purpose than devotion to a life of charity."[33]

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[33] Anna C. Minogue, Loretto, p. 177.

PART TWO

THE LENGTHENING RAYS OF HOLY CROSS

"And further us . . ."

CHAPTER FOUR

BY THE BONDS OF DIVINE LOVE

THE DIVINE LOVE which welled up in the great heart of Very Reverend Basil Anthony Mary Moreau overflowed into the hearts of his spiritual daughters and inspired them to further their work heroically during antebellum days, throughout the ensuing War Between the States, and in the harrowing days of the Reconstruction Era, through fever epidemics, and the devastating effects of floods.

The site of the Provincial House of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross seems to have been prophetic as well as Providential, for it faced Love Street (now Rampart Street) and was bounded by Congress, Elmira, and Good Children (Bons-Enfants) Street, now Saint Claude Avenue. The Marianites, called by obedience to take charge of educating the "good children' of New Orleans indeed needed Divine Love to sustain them. 'Those were the days when small, aged locomotives chugged up Bons-Enfants Street (Saint Claude) from Procterville and disgorged swarms of people at the yellow station at Elysianfields. Those were the days, too, when the Dauphine Line mule cars began to trundle lazily along North Rampart and Dauphine Streets, and Creole folks came in Victorias on Holy Thursday to visit **le Reposoire**, and on Good Friday."[1]

The Community boasted the character common to all works blessed by God—"Its beginnings were small; it had to undergo crises that seemed almost to annihilate it."[2] The Tree of Holy Cross was planted in the year 1841 at Notre Dame du Lac, near South Bend, Indiana; in the year 1840 in Algeria, Africa; in the year 1843 in New Orleans, Louisiana; in the year 1851 in Bengal, India.

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[1] Roger Baudier, K.S.G., **Annunciation Parish**, A Century of Parish Activities, p. 35.

[2] Circular Letter of Father Moreau dated Le Mans, France, February 4, 1842.

True to their vocation, "the instruction and Christian education of young girls, particularly poor and abandoned children,"[3] the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross opened in July, 1851, the Immaculate Conception Industrial School for orphan girls from twelve to eighteen years of age. The spirit that animated the Founder inspired his Daughters in their new home.

A cottage was secured, which served not only as a home but also as an Institute wherein these girls would be trained for useful work in the world.

Madame Jourdan contributed money, clothing, and provisions in memory of her beloved daughter, Athanaise. Her charitable endeavors were shared by Madame Alonzo le Baron and the noble Bridget Dorsey Kelly, who shared the proverbial widow's mite, and the ever generous and self-sacrificing Ursulines. In 1852 the Ursulines provided a new building for the Industrial School, as the old one proved inadequate for its growing needs. Here religious and elementary subjects were taught. Instruction in sewing, cooking, and other domestic arts formed the curriculum of studies given to the thirty orphans.

Through the untiring energy of Sister Mary of the Five Wounds, the Superior, and the assistance of loyal friends, Doctor Mercer, Mr. Octave de Armas, and other generous subscribers, the present brick building at the corner of Rampart and Elmira streets (now Gallier Street) was erected in 1855.

The Industrial School, known as the Immaculate Conception Orphanage, was to serve as a home for girls for over three-score years, despite the epidemics of cholera and yellow fever that ravaged the City through those years and retarded the advancement of the school. Its benefactress, the Widow Dorsey Kelly, no longer content in giving just money and service, completed the sacrifice by devoting her own life to the cause. She is fondly remembered as Sister Mary de Chantal,[4] who for thirty years begged for the orphans. Sister Mary de Chantal was one of the first novices to receive the Holy Habit in New Orleans from the hands of Most Reverend Antoine Blanc, April 29, 1855. Up to this date, postulants made their postulate and novitiate in Indiana.

In May, 1854 Mother Mary of the Five Wounds was commissioned by Very Reverend Basil Moreau to organize the Novitiate in Louisiana. The Sisters had felt the need of a local novitiate for years so that they could perpetuate the work of Holy Cross. A little frame building, later affectionately referred to by the Sisters as "the white house," had been acquired by the Industrial School. This served as the first home for the novices.

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[3] **Constitutions** of the Marianites of Holy Cross.

[4] Tribute given to Sister Mary de Chantal by the citizens of New Orleans in **The Picayune**, City Hall Archives, tells of her activities in behalf of the orphans.

Reverend F. Guesdon, C.S.C. blessed the novitiate on June 24, 1855, and after the usual prayers for the blessing of a house were said, the hymn **Ave Maris Stella** was sung. Sister Mary of the Passion was duly installed as Mistress of Novices, and took formal possession of the novitiate. The services, however, of two novices, who had received the habit in April, were deemed indispensable in the Girls' orphanage, so it was decided to let them continue the exercises of the novitiate under the direction of Reverend Father Guesdon and Sister Mary of the Nativity.[6]

The first band of eight postulants followed the rules as exactly as time, place, and circumstances permitted. The time between the exercises and classes was employed in sewing for the Industrial School. Two of the postulants had a reading knowledge of Latin, but they could not form a choir by themselves; therefore, the Mistress was obliged to fulfill the functions of the right side of the choir and then assist the postulants on the other side, but this lasted for only a short while as the majority of the postulants soon read Latin fluently and were able to form two good choirs.

Within a few months, the regularity of a fervent community reigned in this solitude of peace and joy. In the service of the Master, the novicees found nothing too difficult. The Mistress alone suffered because she was unable to remedy the privations to which her youthful charges were subjected. Butter and sugar were luxuries seldom enjoyed; the tea and the coffee were ordinarily sweetened with molasses; the bread was heavy, and there was very little milk for either tea or coffee. Fresh meat was very scarce. On days of fast and abstinence the supper was composed simply of lentils boiled in water and seasoned with a little salt. The fish was also simply boiled in water. Notwithstanding these privations, the postulants' health continued to be excellent. The hand of God was there sustaining His future spouses. The Mistress of Novices, obliged also to partake of this poor diet with her postulants and novices, became weakened and ill, but was amply compensated for all that she thus suffered by the fervor reigning in the Novitiate.

The furniture was in accord with the poverty of the food, and was reduced to the strictest necessity: one chair for each, which had to be carried to recreation, to the refectory, or to the dormitory according to their needs. Brooms, that is, such as would deserve the name, would have been considered a superfluity. The wood bin

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[5] **Chronicles** of the Marianites, New Orleans, p. 64.

was no better provided for than the rest. The wood was collected all around the place, and when the little community felt too cold indoors, they went out-of-doors into the garden to warm themselves by the heat of the sun during both the time of work and of recreation. Their recreations were very gay. Each one did her best to amuse the others, and when recreation was over, cheerfully returned to her duties in silence.

That the novitiate was surrounded by gardens of flowers was due to the fact that the former proprietor had had a great love for beautiful surroundings. Enclosed by an attractive hedge, the building was situated on a large terrace which led down to a stream of water in which there was an island. Here the postulants spent their recreations. This island was a safe retreat for them, except for the occasional appearance of snakes. Formerly, the spot had been a place of entertainment often resorted to by the many German immigrants of this Third District, under the spiritual guidance of the saintly Father Thevis of St. Roch Church fame.

But the most desirable of all blessings was wanting to the future spouses of Our Lord. There was no chapel; consequently, no Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament in the midst of their solitude. They were obliged to go every morning to the Boys Asylum for Mass, and occasionally to Holy Trinity Church, a great distance from the Novitiate.[6]

From the very beginning of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Very Reverend Basil Moreau, the Founder, constantly recommended fidelity in the exercises of piety, exactitude in keeping silence and avoiding all useless intercourse with the world. Similar requests with regard to poverty and adherence to the Rules of clothing and diet were stressed. The Provincial Superiors were enjoined to be especially vigilant on these points. Those who were sending the roots of the tree of the Cross deep down into the virgin soil of Louisiana knew poverty that verged on heroism.

As early as March 31, 1857 the Congregation was incorporated under Act 132 of the State of Louisiana permitting corporations for literary, scientific, religious and charitable purposes. This Act of Incorporation was passed before Octave de Armas, M. A. Foot. District Attorney, approving same under date mentioned above The officers of the Corporation were Reverend Patrick F. Sheil, C.S.C., President; Sister Mary of the Passion, Sister Mary of the Nativity, Sister Mary of Calvary, Sister Mary of St. Helen, Sister Mary of the Desert, and Sister Mary de Chantal.

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[6] Chronicles, Marianites of Holy Cross, New Orleans, p. 65

In 1857 Very Reverend Basil Moreau saw with his own eyes and blessed with his own hands most of the early works of his spiritual Sons and Daughters, but New Orleans did not have the privilege of a visit from the Founder. On the eleventh of August, 1857, Father Founder arrived at Saint Laurent, near Montreal, in the midst of demonstrations of the joy of his children. ' We embraced," he wrote, "and congratulated each other on our happiness, and then went to the church to sing a hymn of thanksgiving."[7] He was accompanied by a seminarian and two Sisters, one of whom was Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, the foundress of the Marianites of Holy Cross. His indefatigable zeal and his character emerge from almost every sentence of his graphic account of his Act of Visit that year:

> I landed at New York August 11, 1857, and sent immediately a telegraph dispatch to Montreal to inform our community of St. Laurent. On the eve of the following day I arrived at the Seminary of the Sulpicians who received me with that charity which characterizes them, and on the morrow I found myself amidst our dear Canadians. I arrived two days before my dispatch, "which proves," says the Reverend F. Reze, ' that the Reverend Father goes quicker than the telegraph." No person, therefore, expected me, and the little Brother that Father Veoneau charged to announce that news to the Mother Superior of Saint Mary's received for his thanks the answer "that he had lost his senses;" nevertheless the bells of Saint Joseph's and of the parish rang with loud peals. Everybody, Priests, Brothers, and Sisters, was asking one another the cause of the commotion. The news was repeated, and scarcely did it receive credit. Soon it was no longer possible to doubt it, and it is in vain that I try to describe to you the demonstration of joy shown by all.[8]

Our beloved Founder presided at the regular installations of the Superiors of the two Communities, and of the Vice-Province of Saint Laurent, organized the Provincial Chapters and the two Novitiates, promulgated the Constitutions that had just been approved by Rome, heard directions, gave conferences, conferred the holy habit on some postulants, received the profession of some Religious, and finally effected the separation of temporal interests of the Congregation of Holy Cross and the Sisters of Holy Cross. Very Reverend Father Moreau was deeply touched by the religious spirit of the little flock and moved by the filial reception that had been given him. He wrote: "I shall never forget all the marks of affection that your charity unceasingly lavished on me during my too short sojourn among you. They will remain engraved on my heart, and I shall not lose the precious remembrance of them as long as I live."[9]

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[7] Circular Letters (Canada) No. 90, pp. 31-32; also copy filed in Archives of New Orleans Provincial House.

[8] Act of Visit of 1857, Archives, New Orleans Provincial Hoouse, Marianites of Holy Cross.

On August 22, 1857 the Founder left Saint Laurent for Notre Dame du lac, Indiana. "My arrival there caused as much joy as surprise because they did not expect me before the following day. I got there before Father Granger, who had gone to Detroit to meet me."

> I descended at the Postoffice. My presence caused not a little astonishment to the Irish Brother occupied in receiving the dispatches. Very soon the report of my arrival was spread. The big church bell and the twenty-two chimes made themselves heard like those at Saint Laurent. Each one asked the other the cause of the ringing and the commotion. "It is a bishop who has arrived," said Sister Mary of Saint Eugenie to Sister Mary of Saint Alphonsus Rodriguez. "I am sure it is Very Reverend Rector," responded the latter.
>
> Already a great crowd gathered around me, and for a long time I could do nothing but bless them and receive their demonstrations of joy. The surprise rendered their emotion greater, and more general. Very soon we went to the church where I chanted the Te Deum, and celebrated a Mass of thanksgiving, at which all hastened to assist. In a few hours the Father Superior arrived from La Porte where he had been ill, brought on by the fatigue he experienced from preaching a retreat to the Sisters at Chicago. I went with him and the other Confreres to Saint Mary's, distant from Notre Dame du Lac at least as far as our Solitude Au Saveur is from Notre Dame de Sainte Croix. We had hardly gone half the way when we perceived all the Community of the Sisters processionally arranged in two lines, the boarders at the head, and after them the orphans with their banners and banquets in their hands. It was a very touching spectacle to see so many persons fall upon their knees to receive the blessing of a poor pilgrim and sing afterwards the Magnificat, which was followed by several French hymns. Oh! then the tears betrayed my emotion; and I admired the work of God and blessed His providence.
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> I returned to Notre Dame du Lac where I gave a general holiday to the two Communities. I immediately proceeded to the installation of Reverend Edward Sorin as Local Superior and Vicar

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[9] Father Moreau's Act of Visit, 1857, New Orleans Archives Marianites of Holy Cross.

of the Province. On the following day I opened the visit by the usual prayers, and during an entire week I gave exhortations each day, one of which was exclusivelly confined to the promulgation of the Constitutions. I employed the remainder of the time in hearing each person in direction or in organizing the Councils and the Provincial Chapter. With what spirit of faith and docility all opened to me their hearts!

Every morning I crossed through the little wood alongside of the lake, passing the two charming solitudes inhabited by the Salvatorists and the Josephite novices, to read the meditation for the Sisters and to celebrate Mass. I heard the direction of the Sisters and organized their government. Upon my return to Notre Dame in the evening I delivered an exhortation to the members of the Community, sometimes to the scholars whose vacation had just finished.

After prayers, the Council reunited to arrange affairs with the Mother House and Canada or with **New Orleans, whose Superior had arrived, at my demand, with Mother Mary of the Passion.** Those meetings which sometimes were not dismissed before a very advanced hour in the night have produced their fruit, and all the difficulties were settled with one common accord, thanks to the generous and conciliating spirit of Reverend E. Sorin and his councillors, which I convoked from time to time to regulate the separation of both communities as to the temporal interests.

I commenced my other visit by the election of Sister Mary of Saint Angela as Provincial Superioress charged with the direction of St. Mary's Academy, and Sister Mary of the Ascension as Local Superior. I have equally nominated counsellors. How happy I was to see grace triumph everywhere, and my soul without ceasing blessed God for having deigned so far to consolidate His work. Those benedictions of heaven were too abundant for me not to recognize in them the protection of the august patroness of the Society of the Sisters, the ever Blessed Virgin Mary.

The good Superioress of the Academy of St. Mary's knew how to interest us during our visit by a magnificent ceremony, the remembrance of which shall never be effaced from my memory. It was on the eighth of September at nine o clock in the evening that I saw this majestic procession composed of all the religious, their boarders and orphans dressed in their uniform and carrying in their hand a lighted candle. Numerous arcades were raised and ornamented with taste, illuminated by Venetian lanterns. At the extremity of a long and spacious alley, upon a platform which was overhung by a large tree, was prepared a repository decorated with as much art as grandeur, and an altar destined to receive the statue of Mary, which was carried in the middle of the ranks, on which were reflected with inexpressible charm numerous sets of lights; while the procession directed its course towards the place, sacred songs ceased not to be heard. From there they proceeded by pathways magnificently illuminated to a little island which was blessed and consecrated to the Immaculate Virgin. This imposing spectacle has had more effect upon me than all the rest that I saw. I thanked the Mistress and the scholars of the Academy for the sweet joys they made me experience in those enchanted places.

In the meantime the regular visit was near its close; I had given the Holy Habit of religion and received the vows of Profession of those who were duly received. **I had hardly time to converse upon organization of the Vicarage of New Orleans,** the Superior and Superioress of which came at their own expense and much fatigue to consult me. Every time I met them I reproached myself with putting their patience to the test, and I felt grieved at not being able to visit their province. I did not even find time to answer individually their letters which expressed so ardent a desire to enjoy the favor of my visit, so many souls there are devoted to the Mother House and are so anxious to see and to hear from me. All this augmented my regret, but the season did not permit me to follow the motions of my heart, and, besides, I felt a pressing necessity of returning to France, not having received any news from them but once. I was therefore forced, through necessity, to be resigned to the sacrifice of not visiting you, dear family of Louisiana, for whom I have so devoted an affection and interest; God alone knows how much it has cost. At least, our hearts understood one another's. And I have been able to organize your Councils; also, your Provincial Chapter, and to arrange all your temporal affairs in accordance with your Superior and Superioress who console me so much in speaking of each one of you. Continue to dwell united and obedient, persevering in the faithful observance of your pious exercises and my prescriptions which must have already been communicated to you. You especially, novices, benefit by the direction of your good Sister Mary of St. Patrick.

I had to visit the Brothers and Sisters at Chicago whose occupations prevented their coming to Notre Dame. I returned to Notre Dame, arriving there at Midnight the following Sunday, still in the company of Father Sorin. The following day, the eve of my departure, I was especially preoccupied with the manner of my forming the subjects of the three Societies. I had satisfactorily installed them in their different novitiates and fixed their exercises; but there was yet an important point to be settled—it was to procure Directories and Rules in the language of each. Consequently, I charged Mother Mary of St. Angela to translate them into English with the first part of the Pedagogy. Sister Mary of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez will translate them into German. As soon as that will be achieved, the manuscript will be verified, approved and given to the printer. Have patience, therefore, all of you who have expressed so ardent a desire of knowing your duty better; your desires will be granted.

At last the day appointed for my departure arrived. I had both Communities meet at the Church of Notre Dame to assist at Mass, to receive my last adieus, and to recite the prayers of the itinerary. At seven o'clock that sorrowful ceremony was terminated; all hearts were affected, tears flowed. They went upon their knees and received my last benediction. They lavished upon me marks of the tenderest attachments. I tore myself at length away to arrive in time at the depot for the train at South Bend which was to transport me to New York and from there to the Capitol of Pennsylvania, where I had to visit a new establishment.

I arrived at Philadelphia accompanied by Father Sorin on Thursday about night fall. I heard in direction until one o'clock in the morning, presided at the meditation, made several exhortations in the chapel, organized the Council of Administration, distributed a good many obediences, and terminated my visit by giving the religious habit and receiving the vows of Profession. This visit completed my joy, and permitted me to enter into raptures with the good Brothers of Saint Paul and the Sisters of Philadelphia with whom were joined those of Susquehanna to assist at my visit. The moment of my embarkation was approaching, and I could not delay any longer. I had therefore to go, and what cost my heart the most was the parting with the dear brother, the Reverend E. Sorin, who ceased not to lavish upon me the most delicate attentions, dictated by charity. The extreme fatigue which he experienced would not permit him to return to New York. He accompanied me, however, to get my ticket for the cars where we arrived and I entered at one o'clock in the morning. Then we embraced each other with the affection of two souls who felt themselves united like those of David and Jonathan, and in five hours time I was in New York. . . . Although separated from you by so great a distance, you will be present everywhere with me to my latest breath, with all the circumstances of my visit to you. To all of you who have accompanied me by your prayers and desires during my foreign and perilous voyage, I also owe you a

> tribute of gratitude. It was inspiring to see the Salvatorists and Josephites and the Marianites of Holy Cross as the members of one family united under one head in one community of sentiments and interests if not temporal, at least spiritual.
>
> For more uniformity in correspondence, you will henceforth indicate in your signature to which Society you belong by signing as follows: S.S.C. (Salvatorists of Holy Cross) J.S.C. (Josephites of Holy Cross); M.S.C. (Marianites of Holy Cross.)[10]

As the above Act of Visitation of the Founder contains in it the separation of the Priests and Brothers (the Congregation of Holy Cross) as to temporal interests from the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross and marks for the Sisters the beginning of an autonomous community, it has been cited at length. It explains likewise the reason why the Founder was unable to visit the New Orleans community, and shows the initials he wished the religious of the three distinct communities, Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters, to place at the end of their signature in all their correspondence.

The Founder's wonderful powers of organization are evident in this account of his visit to Canada and to the United States; also, his paternal and affectionate esteem for his Sons and Daughters. These profiles of the Founder could be found in none of the other correspondence so well as in this Act of Visitation.

To return to the narrative of the New Orleans Provincial House, in 1860 when the Congregation amended its original charter of 1857, the title given to the corporation was The Congregation of Holy Cross. The officers at this date were Reverend Patrick Sheil, C.S.C., President; Sister Mary of the Nativity, Sister Mary of St. Sebastian, and Sister Mary of St. Stanislaus, Councillors. When Mother Mary of St. Alphonsus assumed the duties of Superior General in 1865, Sister Mary of Holy Cross (Haggerty) became Mother Provincial of the Louisiana Community.

In 1861, plans for the erection of the Holy Angels Academy were approved by Most Reverend Jean Marie Odin, C.M., Archbishop of New Orleans. The school had been operating since 1854, when at the request of Most Reverend Antoine Blanc, Archbishop of New Orleans, the Sisters undertook the instruction of young women in the downtown section of New Orleans. Holy Angels' history fills another chapter of this book. During the antebellum days and thereafter this, the first high school of the Marianites in Louisiana, met with generous patronage.

The years from '62 to '72 were years of great suffering. Accounts of the threatening War between the States filled the pages of the chronicles. Many privations were endured by all classes and all institutions, educational establishments not excepted.

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[10] Act of Visit, Very Reverend Basil Moreau, August, 1857, Copy in New Orleans Archives, Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross.

> The Superioress and all the Sisters sewed constantly and even had to pass many nights working, but all bore cheerfully the want of sleep and rest, and the many other privations, particularly the want of proper diet. The coffee had to be made of rye, chicory and toasted bread, all of which were very poor substitutes for the real coffee, for instead of producing the stimulating effects of coffee, they only caused heaviness and sleep. Fresh meat and butter, particularly the latter, were not to be obtained; for fully six months the Community and orphans did not taste butter. Some real coffee had been kept in reserve for those who needed it while spending the night in sewing. During the night, when occupied in sewing, the Rosary was said; morning prayers were recited and meditation made.[11]

So urgent were the demands of the Confederacy, that in order to meet them the Sisters' whole time had to be occupied making knapsacks of the very coarsest kind of cotton and shirts from ladies' wollen shawls because no flannel could be procured.[12]

Into their Rules the Founder had written a thought that strengthened and encouraged them in their hardships:

> The Sisters shall not be surprised to meet with some of those privations for which the Divine Master prepared His disciples; they will receive from His Providence, with the same thanksgiving, what is absolutely necessary, and what is over and above the same, all trials and all consolations.[13]

Despite the progress of the war, the construction of the Academy advanced. In 1862 on May 3, the Feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross, the cornerstone was laid for the Academy of the Holy Angels, which still forms the main building in the present Holy Cross group bounded by North Rampart, Saint Claude, Congress, and Gallier Streets. The Act of Incorporation of this institution was drawn up by Octave de Armas on February 2, 1866, and signed by Reverend Patrick F. Sheil, C.S.C., Mother Mary of St. Alphonse, Sister Mary of Holy Cross, Sister Mary of St. Sebastian, Sister Mary of the Archangels, Sister Mary of the Nativity, and Sister Mary of St. Bernard. The witnesses were Louis M. Ducros and Edward Douglas White. The Academy building was completed and dedicated on October 2, 1866, to the Holy Angels.

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[11] Chronicles, M. de S. C., New Orleans, Louisiana, pp. 136-137.

[12] Idem.

[13] Rules of the Congregation of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, Rule III on the Vows of Poverty, Article 3.

During 1863 the Sisters of the mission houses returned to the Provincial House to spend their vacation in improving themselves scholastically. Their hopes did not rest alone in building of brick and mortar; they laid a foundation of culture that remains for future generations. Mother Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona (Haggerty) especially distinguished herself as an educator, training those members of the Community who later served Holy Cross as Provincial Superiors, Mother Mary of St. Cesaria (Mary McDonnell) and Mother Mary of St. Modestus (Clarke.)

In a letter of October 15, 1862, Very Reverend Basil Moreau acknowledged receipt of news from New Orleans, and said that he would again forward copies of the Circulars which had not reached their destination on account of the war. On December 4 the Reverend Charles Moreau, General Visitor, and nephew of the Founder, arrived in New Orleans. All were most happy to receive the worthy representative of the Founder, especially since he was the first General Visitor who came as far as Louisiana. His counsels were received with gratitude.

The Founder's Circular Letter of January 29, 1863, contained the first indication of the Indiana Province's desire to separate in administration from the Mother House:

> Seeing that Reverend Charles Moreau is detained at Notre Dame or elsewhere in Indiana, by difficulties always springing up, I determined on telling you of it, saying first that your establishments in France, in Canada, in New York, in New Orleans and in Bengal (Oriental) console me by their devotedness, obedience and attachment to the Mother House and regularity.[14]

The Indiana Province did not wish a visitation by Father Charles Moreau. The obstacles described by the Founder as "guns of division" were Indiana's reasons for desiring American administration. Realizing a crisis was at hand, the Founder submitted to His Holiness, Pope Pius IX, the Constitutions he had promulgated upon his visit to the States in 1857, supported by a letter from the Right Reverend C. Fillion, Bishop of Mans, asking the long-desired Canonical approbation. Since the Founder's petition to the Holy Father contains in it not only his earnest plea for recognition of his Sons and Daughters but also a survey of the Congregation's works at that given moment it is quoted below: After addressing His Holiness, Father Moreau states:

> For twenty years the Congregation of Holy Cross was composed of three Societies. When in approving it and its Constitutions Your Holiness told me to separate that of the Marianite

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[14] Father Moreau's Circular Letter of January 29, 1863.

Sisters from the two others, continuing meanwhile to govern myself and giving them the Rules which might appear to me the most suitable to their Institution. Now this separation being accomplished, I have revised the Constitutions which I gave them from the beginning of their Congregation and have modified them as much as I found necessary in agreement with the General Chapter. For this reason I join them to this petition in order that Your Holiness may have a full knowledge of the whole. But to complete this knowledge I beg leave to add that the Marianite Sisters have hitherto applied themselves with much success under the government of these Constitutions to the education of young girls, especially the poor, and to the care of the sick, so that their Society continues constantly to increase. At the present time it numbers three hundred and sixteen Professed and fifty-five Novices. Moreover, they have thirty-four Houses scattered throughout twelve Dioceses in France, America, and Eastern Bengal; namely, in France, two in the diocese of Mans, two in that of Versailles, one in that of St. Brieux, one in that of Paris, In America, five in the diocese of Montreal, one in that of Chicago, six in that of Fort Wayne, one in that of New York; three in Philadelphia, two in New Orleans, two in that of Baltimore, where they have charge of five Military Hospitals including those in the dioceses of Alton and Louisville, and lastly one in our Vicariate Apostolic of Eastern Bengal; and everywhere they produce abundant fruits of sanctification especially in the Military Hospitals wherein since the beginning of the American War they have baptized more than three hundred Protestants. But to confirm so much virtue and merit by renewed encouragement, these Sisters earnestly desire and humbly ask that the Holy Apostolic See deign to approve their Congregation and make it firm by an act of the authority in approving the Constitutions which I gave them several years ago according to the good pleasure of Your Holiness.

May I be allowed, all unworthy though I be, to join my petition to that of these same Sisters, that Your Holiness deign in His Goodness to determine what spiritual relations shall exist between the Marianites and our Congregation of Holy Cross, for it would be a great consolation to them, notwithstanding the separation effected, if they could expect from us some spiritual services such as those practiced between the Daughters of Saint Vincent de Paul and the Lazarists to the great satisfaction of the Bishops in France and America.

Nevertheless, may your will be done, Most Holy Father, and not mine, because it is thus that I shall accomplish the good pleasure of God to which I shall remain attached in life and in death.

Permit me only to solicit for myself and the Sisters above mentioned your Apostolic Benediction, and deign to regard me until the end of my days, Most Holy Father, as the most obedient Son of your Holiness.[15]

After exhorting the Marianites to apply themselves to the fulfillment of the Rules and Constitutions in order to merit the approval by Rome, the Founder permits some of the sorrow that has been weighing heavily upon his heart to overflow:

However, it may be, my dear Daughters in Jesus Christ, I am willing to forget what has happened so unfortunately at Our Lady of the Lake (that of refusing to receive the General Visitor, Father Charles Moreau and Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors as legitimate Superiors). I am willing to think only of the good that has been effected thanks to the courage and zeal of its Founder (Father Sorin) and think of the means to hinder the reappearance of those attempts of the evil one.

On this account, I beseech you, never to forget that if you owe to the Ordinaries or Bishops of the Dioceses where they condescend to employ you the most profound veneration as well as the most religious obedience, you also ought to remain subject and cordially united to your Superior General, not to mention what you owe to me as the instrument, all unworthy though it be, of the foundation of your Society up to the moment when the Sovereign Pontiff shall condescend to receive my resignation . . . . But, should it happen that they (the Bishops) would wish to separate you from the government of your Mother Superior, or lastly cause you to act contrary to your Rules, or especially to your Constitutions, then in such cases you remain free to abandon those dioceses, since you have merely been sent there and admitted on condition understood at least that you would be left at liberty to follow your Rules and your Religious practices. It is thus that the Venerable Prelates of America have added, with scarcely one exception, to this day and indeed wisely, no regulations, and several of them have even declared themselves unwilling to accept your services unless you remained dependent upon the Mother House and also on my government.

Now, my dear daughters in Jesus Christ, your Mother House has been and yet remains fixed in France, and an article of your Constitutions submitted to the Holy See with the approbation of my Lord Fillion, our new Bishop, determines expressly that it shall remain in his diocese so long as the General Council of your Society does not decide otherwise.[16]

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[15] Circular Letter of Father Moreau, February 17, 1863 in which letter to His Holiness is quoted.

[16] Father Founder's Circular Letter from Le Mans, February 17, 1863.

Encouraging letters continued to come from both the Founder and the General Superioress, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, urging exact fulfillment of their duties while awaiting the decisions of the Holy See:

> We have only to pray and to wait in peace for the decisions of the Holy See. Continue to fulfill your obedience as good religious without changing from one establishment to another until the moment when Obedience which you have vowed to God will assign you another House or another employment. Thus you will save your soul in working for others and you will console him who will be yours until death—Moreau.[17]
>
> Rely always, my dear Sisters, on my absolute devotedness and rest assured that our Very Reverend Father General will not abandon us. He has approved of, in all its points, the conduct of Reverend Charles Moreau in his visit of the Houses in America since with the exception of those of the Lake all have known how to appreciate the advantages of it.—Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors.[18]

A letter dated January 17, 1865 was received a week later from Monsignor H. Luers, Bishop of Fort Wayne, Indiana, in which His Grace, announced that the Congregation of the Propaganda had authorized him to organize the Congregation of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross in America into one Province, the Provincial House to be situated at St. Mary's, Notre Dame du Lac, Indiana, until the approbation of the Constitutions.

Monsignor Luers convoked a General Chapter at Indiana under his presidency March 5, 1865. The following Superioresses repaired to this Chapter: Sister Mary of St. Angela, Superioress of St. Mary's, Indiana; Sister Mary of St. Leocadie, Superioress of St. Laurent, Canada; Sister Mary of the Redemption, Superioress of New York; and Sister Mary of St. Alphonsus Rodriguez, Superioress at New Orleans, Louisiana.

From the Louisiana Province Sisters Mary of St. Sebastian and Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona were elected deputies after having complied with all the ordinances of His Lordship, the Apostolic Delegate.

The short space of time that remained between the reception of the Bishop's letter and the epoch fixed for the holding of the Chapter, did not permit the Superioress to write and to receive an answer from the General Superiors. This was the cause of regret and even of bitter tears to those who understood the embarrassing position in which they were placed by this state of things. In this difficult circumstance the Provincial Superioress consulted Monsignor Jean Marie Odin, Archbishop of New Orleans, who told her she should obey and repair to the Chapter. Before repairing to the Provincial Chapter, the Provincial Superioress addressed a letter to Very Reverend Basil Moreau, an answer to which she received only after her arrival in Indiana; under date of February 24th the General Superior had replied:

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[17] The Founder's Circular Letter from Le Mans, June 17, 183.

[18] Mother Fooundress' (Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors) Letter of June 27, 1863; i.e., the letter is dated May 9 but was received in the United States June 27.

> I learned with pleasure that you had decided upon repairing to the Provincial Chapter in Indiana; it was your right and your duty—your right in virtue of the office you hold in your Congregation, and you would have done wrong had you yielded your right; your duty on account of the interests you represent and also on account of the Convocation you received from the Delegate of the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda. You will have participated in the deliberations of this assembly before you will receive this letter, but I felt the need of thanking you for your affectionate remembrance,your devotedness to the Mother House and of giving you in this last particular an assurance thereof.
>
> Devote yourself, therefore, with all the energy and good will that the welfare of your society demands of you, of which trials will sooner or later tend to the sanctification of the worthy Daughters of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors.

In this Chapter Sister Mary of Saint Alphonsus was elected Provincial Superioress for all the establishments of the Sisters in America, and Sister Mary of the Holy Cross, (Haggerty), Local Superioress in the Province of Louisiana. This election pleased Very Reverend Basil Moreau because Sister Mary of St. Alphonsus was familiar with the usages and rules of the Mother House.[19]

Within three years, death terminated Mother Mary of Holy Cross (Haggerty's) provincialship in Louisiana, but she had served the Community in its Provincial Council for a number of years. It was under her administration that the Holy Angels Academy building was completed and opened, and incorporated under the State Laws in 1866.

A name deeply interwoven with the Marianites' varied history is that of Haggerty's. Three daughters of this family were among the early members of the Society, all of whom served it well and faithfully; Mother Mary of Holy Cross (Ellen Haggerty) under whose administration as Provincial the Holy Angels Academy building was completed and opened as well as incorporated under the State Laws in 1866; Mother Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona (Ann Haggerty), and Sister Mary of St. Bernard (Margaret Haggerty), General Councillor. Reverend Mother Mary of Egypt's notice of Sister Mary of Saint Bernard's death gives an insight into the ability of this, the least-known of the three pioneers:

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[19] Letter from Very Reverend Basil Moreau dated May, 1865. (Simultaneously with the notification of the approbation of the Constitutions, the Sacred Congregation apprised our Reverend Mother Foundress that the Chapter held in Indiana in 1865 had been annulled by the Holy See.)

> Sister Mary of St. Bernard, in the world, Margaret Haggerty, was born to Ballyholland, Parish of Rosscarbery, County Cork, Ireland, on April 20, 1831, and received the religious habit at the Novitiate in New Orleans on July 2, 1857. Notwithstanding her state of suffering for almost ten years, she did not hesitate as soon as the doctor judged her departure possible, to come from New Orleans to take her place in the Council assigned to her devotedness by the election of the General Chapter. Then especially could we intimately appreciate the excellent qualities which grace gave her for the service of our General Administration.[20]

In the modern period, a niece, the present Provincial of Louisiana, Mother Mary Xavier (Margaret Mary Haggerty), a second niece, Sister Mary of St. Odile (Catherine Haggerty), who died in 1898, and a sixth member of the family, a grand-niece, Sister Mary Loyola (Mary Haggerty) have kept the thread of the family continuously running through the Community's existence for ninety-two years of its 107 years. There were other nieces of Mothers Mary of Holy Cross, Mary of St. Bernard and Mary of St. Margaret; namely, Mother Mary of St. Raphael (Aily O'Donovan), Provincial Superior 1909-1912; Sister Mary of St. Paula (Mary Ellen Carter), Sister Mary of St. Finian, (Aily O'Sullivan), Sister Mary of St. Francis (Johannah Coghlan), who, though not among the pioneers, came out from Ireland to answer the call of the foreign mission of America. They were as emeralds set in the Crescent (New Orleans is styled as the Crescent City) where they spent themselves in the instruction of youth.

One need count only from the first to the fourth member to enter the Community to find the first candidate from the "Isle of Saints"—Sister Mary of the Nativity, Elizabeth Dailey of Cullycorbert. The next move takes one to the eleventh member, Sister Mary of St. Brigitte, Honorine Cortan, Rothcormack, County Cork, Ireland. One hundred forty-one members have entered from Ireland in the Louisiana Province alone—one-third of the Community's membership. Among the older members from Ireland have been 'emeralds" that glistened with exceptional brilliance as the educators and the leaders of the Community. Many of the present members from Ireland form true jewels in the Crescent City's crown—membership of the New Orleans Community, holding important posts as Superiors of the houses of Incarnate Word, Saints Peter and Paul, Saint Rita, St. Charles (Lake Charles) Immaculate Conception Academy (Opelousas) St. Edmund Convent (Eunice); Sacred Heart Convent (Ville Platte); St. Francis De Sales (Houma); St. Basil Academy (Plaquemine); Sacred Heart Academy (Morgan City). Each decade of the Twentieth Century witnessed bands of postulants coming from Ireland. The most recent contingent arrived in the spring of 1948. The contribution of the "Isle of Saints' to the Community by way of personnel has been a continuous one.

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[20] Obituary March 8, 1869 sent from Le Mans Mother House March 9, 1869.

Though the early years had been marked by many difficulties they had served to purify and to sanctify the successes that followed. Father Moreau hastened to announce that during his sojourn in Rome in 1866 he had the consolation of informing Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, that the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda had decided to give its decision—the Constitutions of the Congregation were approved. As testimony to the Founder's zeal for the approbation of the Rules, an incident is related in the **Voix de Notre Dame de Chartres,** published May 8, 1867:

> In the month of February a priest by the name of Reverend Father Moreau of the Congregation of Holy Cross came to Notre Dame de Chartres, accompanied by two religious Marianites (Mother Seven Dolors and Sister Mary Liguori), to solicit special graces from heaven. That same day, while they were making this pilgrimage the Apostolic Approbation of their Order was signed at Rome. A few days afterwards Reverend Father Moreau made a visit of thanksgiving to the shrine of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose protection had been so visible.

The custom of two Sisters making a pilgrimage from Le Mans to this shrine of the Blessed Mother in thanksgiving for this favor is perpetuated by the Marianites in France every year on February 19, the anniversary of the approbation of the Rules.

The fifteenth of November, 1879 was signalized by the arrival of Reverend Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors in New Orleans. This was not Mother's first visit to the Louisiana Province, as she had come in 1870, but it was the first personal contact since the Founder's death. On the day following Mother's arrival, the pupils of the Academy and the orphans of the Asylum assembled in their respective Halls to tender her their greetings of welcome. Two addresses were read, one in French and another in English, which were enlivened by songs and several pieces of instrumental music.

The orphans, likewise, read an address in English, and sang several choruses, after which our Reverend Mother distributed candy to all present. The "minims," especially, received an abundant supply and much carressing from our Foundress who showed her exquisite charity for Christ's poor by giving a decided preference to the orphaned little ones.

Towards the end of March, 1880 Reverend Mother received a dispatch from the Mother House stating that the political condition of affairs in France required her presence there at an early date. Therefore, she was obliged to make immediate preparations for her departure. On the seventh of April she bade farewell to her daughters of New Orleans after having spent nearly five months in their midst, instructing them in the religious virtues by daily precepts, but much more efficaciously by her great humility, her ardent piety, her childlike simplicity and her perfect observance of the common life, from the smallest practice of which she never exempted herself.

An oratory in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was erected on the nineteenth of February, 1880, the anniversary of the canonical approbation of the Constitutions. A handsomely carved altar, the handiwork and gift of a kind clergyman, admirably suited to this purpose, was installed, and on it was placed a statue of the Sacred Heart which had been brought from Paris. The erection of this oratory was gratifying to the whole community as devotion to the Sacred Heart was dear to its members. The seclusion of the oratory invited one to recollection and prayer. It was seldom without a number of devout worshippers. To give an increased stimulus to this devotion, his Lordship, Most Reverend Francis X. Leray, Archbishop of New Orleans, on the occasion of his first visit graciously accorded an indulgence of forty days for every visit made to this little Oratory.

If flowers are in season, a tiny flower, we are told in books on etiquette, should be placed beside the glass to indicate to a guest that the server esteems it a joy to wait upon the guest. Prince or pauper is entitled to the same service. It was always the season of such flowers for the worshippers, students and religious, of the Sacred Heart, their Guest Divine symbolized by the beautiful image brought from France. Actual flowers were often placed on this shrine; spiritual flowers, in greater abundance. Time was another flower they laid at the feet of the Sacred Heart, and when they left His little oratory, they felt secure that His Heart was hearing their cause as ardently as if it were the only one that had been presented to Him that day.

That the dear Sacred Heart started immediately to return the spiritual bouquets to the Sisters is evident in the favor received in

1880. The Sisters rejoiced in 1880 to have the Jesuit Fathers assume charge of their Provincial House Chapel. These priests assisted the Community here just as devotedly, as loyally, and as zealously as they did at Saint Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum. Guided by these noble educators and holy priests, the success of the Marianites' service to Holy Mother Church as an educational order was assured. Not only the Chronicles of the Community but the tablet of the heart holds the record of the Sisters' gratification at having the Jesuits as their spiritual guides. One of the Sisters, recalling the favor of 1880 in the year 1887 writes as follows:

> The following signal favor received from God during this month of July, deserves to be chronicled, inasmuch as it put an end to a serious inconvenience to which for several previous years the Sisters had been subjected; namely, that of being frequently deprived of Holy Mass on week days. The chaplains were being constantly changed, and seldom was one assigned who had health to fulfill his functions.
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> We bore with this reluctantly, but very patiently, till at length the removal of our chaplain to another Diocese, and the impossibility of replacing him, presented an opportunity of requesting the ecclesiastical authorities to allow us to solicit the services of the Jesuits, who had been our spiritual directors for several years. Very Reverend G. Raymond, administrator, of the Diocese, in the absence of the Archbishop and his Coadjutor, readily acceded to the proposal. Accordingly, Mother Provincial ventured to renew an unsuccessful appeal, already made by her predecessor, to the Superior of the Jesuits with a view to obtaining one of the Fathers to say Mass for the Sisters daily. At first, the Superior, Very Reverend Theobald W. Butler, seemed to think it impossible to comply with the request; nevertheless, his kind heart would not permit him to refuse. He dismissed Mother telling her that in a few days he would send her an answer by mail. Meanwhile, novenas and prayers were offered up by the Community that Father Butler's reply might prove favorable. On the ever memorable twelfth of July, 1880, a Jesuit Father came to say Mass. Since then we have never been deprived of this privilege up to the present date, July 5, 1887, except once when the snow made it impossible for the priest to come.[21]

This shower of spiritual consolations lavished upon the Marianites served but as a harbinger of some trial about "to initiate them into the secret of God's providential manner with those He loves." In the second week of February, 1882, nearly half of the city was inundated by the waters of Lake Pontchartrain, which were blown in through the swamps in the direction of the river by a violent southeast wind. It is impossible to describe the disaster. The inundated districts, inhabited by poor people who depended upon their daily labor for subsistence, were reduced by the flood to a state of complete inactivity, and these people passed whole days either grouped at the doors of their houses or crowded at their windows gazing out at the skiffs which navigated the streets now transformed into canals. The Mayor of New Orleans and a number of charitable citizens came to the aid of these poor people with an abundant supply of provisions, clothing, and other articles.

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[21] **Chronicles**, M.S.C., New Orleans, Louisiana, II, p. 15.

[22] Circular Letter of Very Reverend Basil Moreau, Noo. 28.

The Sisters had now greater reason to be alarmed, because the waters had risen several feet in the rear of their premises. Immediately they had recourse to prayer; candles were burned before the Blessed Sacrament, and medals of Saint Benedict were placed on the fences, as this saint is invoked in time of danger. Shortly afterwards the Sisters experienced signal protection from heaven. Their garden fence seemed an insuparable barrier to the further advance of the water, which after two days began to recede.

Another spiritual favor is a cherished memory of the year 1882. On the twentieth of August of that year the Community entered upon the exercises of the annual retreat which were given by Reverend Albert Wagner, S.J. During this retreat Father Wagner spoke much of the beautiful devotion to the Sacred Heart, a devotion always especially dear to every member of the Louisiana community; and if in any heart it had been extinguished, Father Wagner's eloquent words rekindled its flame. Recalling the consoling promises made to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque by Our Lord, that He would grant final perseverance to anyone who would communicate on the first Friday of every month for nine consecutive Fridays, Father Wagner recommended that upon the opening of the schools the teachers should make it their first objective to recommend the novena of Fridays in honor of the Sacred Heart to their pupils.

Very Reverend Basil Anthony Moreau had a very special devotion to the Holy Face, which he fostered among his spiritual daughters. He procured from Rome a copy of the Holy Image of Veronica for each of the Holy Cross establishments. A vigil light burns constantly throughout the day before this image. In the community archives there is the following record of a favor chronicled for the glory of the Holy Face:

> We take pleasure in chronicling a cure which was effected by the application of the oil taken from the lamp that burns con-

tinually before a picture of the Holy Face in our conventual chapel.

A little boy had a large tumor growing on his neck, for the cure of which medical science had been resorted to without any avail. His mother, a woman of faith and piety, determined to have recourse to prayer. Our Sisters advised her to make a novena in honor of the Holy Face. This she did, daily applying the oil to the affected part. At the end of the nine days, the tumor had miraculously disappeared.

Our Lady of the Seven Dolors Chapel was erected in 1885 during the administration of Mother Mary of the Immaculate Conception, and was dedicated on July 11 of that year shortly before Mother left New Orleans to become Mistress of Novices at the Mother House, Le Mans, France. A solidly-built edifice, 98' x 45', of the Romanesque type, the chapel has a recessed sanctuary crowned with a massive wooden arched dome, showing traces of Gothic influence. Mr. James Freret was the architect, and Mr. Edward Murray, the contractor.

At 7 A.M. on the eleventh of July, the hour appointed for the ceremony, the chapel was well filled with friends and benefactors of the Institution. His Lordship, Most Reverend Francis X. Leray, was prevented from officiating on the occasion, so he delegated for this purpose Very Reverend Father Theobald Butler, S.J. Superior of the Jesuits. The procession, composed of nine priests, several acolytes and the whole Community, marched around the chapel then through the aisles, the Very Reverend Father Butler blessing it according to the prescribed ritual. It was a touching spectacle, this ecclesiastical pageant in the aisles, the kneeling forms of the Sisters and of those who filled the edifice. Lambillotte's **Quid Retribuam,** Hermann's **Ecce Panis,** and Mozart's **Ave Maria** were sung by the convent choir. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given after Mass, at the closing of which the solemn **Te Deum** was intoned. All in the chapel stood while in the language of the great Saint Ambrose and Saint Augustine they thanked Almighty God for His wonderful goodness and love.

Three months later, on October 25, at 4 P.M. the ceremony of blessing the bell for the new chapel was performed by His Lordship, Most Reverend Francis X. Leray. The bell was placed in the middle of the aisle of the chapel, just in front of the altar. Mounted on a tall pedestal covered with pink draperies, it was literally covered with roses and evergreens. Standing about the bell were the chairs for the Archbishop and his assistants, while at one side on a small table were arranged the vessels of holy water, of holy oil and of incense. The Archbishop, having read the prayers of the

Pontificale, sprinkled the outside of the bell with holy water, using a green sprig as an **aspergillum.** His assistant priests then washed the bell with holy water, inside and out, after which His Lordship anointed it, performing seven unctions upon the swelling golden bowl, and four upon the inside; after which he gave it its name—"Mary of the Seven Dolors Francis Xavier Basil Stanislaus". His Lordship held the silver censor to the new bell's metal lips and the breath of incense was breathed into the body of the bell. The godmother, Mrs. Louise Grunewald, then crowned the baptized bell with a wreath of roses. His Lordship reached out his hand, and, for the first time, Mary of the Seven Dolors rang out its Christian song. Three times did the Archbishop smite the bell, and in like manner the two assistants struck the metal, and the new bell was dedicated to the service of the Church, to the calling of sinners and saints to worship, to the calling of young virgins to the espousals of the Lamb, to the tolling of the passage of religious from this life. This bell has only one restriction—that of not being rung on Holy Saturday before that of the nearest parish Church.[23] For over half a century it has triumphantly announced the approaching Brides of Christ as they annually wend their way to the chapel for the reception of the Holy Habit of the Marianites; jubilantly it has announced the silver and golden jubilees of the older professed Sisters, and sadly it has tolled the news that some happy religious sleeps in the Lord. When a Sister dies the bell is tolled once every minute for an hour and then continuously for fifteen minutes. Other customs have arisen concerning the ringing of the bell. The rising bell is sounded fourteen times in memory of the seven joys and the seven sorrows of Saint Joseph, patron of the Community. The first bell that is rung for a religious exercise is rung seven times to recall to the Sisters' minds the seven dolors of their Heavenly patroness, Our Lady of Seven Dolors. The second bell which marks the beginning of the exercise five minutes later is sounded three times in memory of the Holy Family, Jesus, Mary and Joseph, after whom Father Moreau patterned his religious family.

Notable gifts presented to the chapel of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors are the statue of Our Lady (the **Pieta**) which rests above the main altar, and the statue of the Sacred Heart which stands to the Gospel side of the sanctuary, both of which were imported from France.

On the Feast of the Presentation of Our Lady, November 21, 1885, the Marianites enjoyed the privilege of receiving for a second time within a year a visit from His Lordship, Most Reverend James Gibbons, Archbishop of Baltimore. With affectionate cordiality warm greetings, entwined with musical selections, were tendered His Lordship at an impromptu reception in the large study hall of the Academy. Archbishop Gibbons' "gentle dignity" remained etched in the memories of those whom he addressed on this occasion. Within two years from this reception, he was elevated to the office of Cardinal.

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[23] **Chronicles,** M.S.C., New Orleans Provincial House, 1848-1934, p. 28.

Final approbation of the Constitutions of the Congregation was announced by Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors in a letter dated January 6, 1886. Immediately after its reception, this circular letter was read, in French and in English, to the assembled community. Great was the enthusiasm and joy that beamed on all countenances at the realization of their long-cherished hope: Reverend Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors revealed to her daughters the spirit that should animate them:

> Let us rejoice in this, that our dear Constitutions came back to us from Rome honored for the second time and forever, with the august sanction which makes them an infallible means of salvation if we are faithful to observe them.
>
> Let us rejoice with our Reverend Father Founder that the plan of his religious legislation so wisely drawn up with the assistance of the Holy Spirit has been preserved a second time and forever, for it is very truly and entirely the book of Constitutions of Very Reverend Father Basil Moreau which is given us by our Holy Father Pope Leo XIII, as it had been given by our Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, to conduct us to the perfection of the religious state in the peace of obedience, and in the harmony of the common life.[24]
>
> The Eminent and Reverend Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Propaganda, Cardinal Simeoni, our most Venerated Protector and Father at Rome, himself invites us by his most gracious and affectionate example, to expand our hearts to receive the plenitude of the divine gift, by deigning to say to me in his letter which accompanies the Decree: "I am very much rejoiced to be able now to write to you concerning the approbation of the Constitutions of your Institute of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. I rejoice with you and your Institute, to see thus satisfied your desire to have your Constitutions approved, and I am sure that this will animate all the Sisters of this same Institute to apply themselves with an ever-increasing attachment to their sanctification, and to the exercise of the work of charity towards the neighbor according to the spirit of these same Constitutions.[25]

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[24] Extracts from Reverend Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors' letter transmitting the news of the approbation of the Constitutions, dated January 6, 1886.

[25] Idem.

> It was, as you may recall, by his circular letter of February 17, 1863, that His Reverence asked our prayers for the success of this petition. Notwithstanding our entire unworthiness, heaven has deigned to hear our prayer, and grant the desire of our venerated Founder, thus crowning his life of trial and sacrifice. Eternal thanks, then, to the most holy Mother of God, Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, through whom her poor daughters have received this greatest of all consolations on the very day when, in union with the whole Church, they were commemorating the sufferings of her Divine Son. For you will not fail to note, my dear Sisters, in an event so providential, the touching circumstance that the decree of our approbation, dated Tuesday, February 19, the feast of Our Lord's prayer in the garden of Olives, was graciously transmitted to me by His Lordship on the following Friday, the feast of Our Lord's Passion, thus granting to us from the very height of the cross the most precious graces through the intercession of His compassionate Mother, which circumstance should render more and more dear to us, our sweet name of Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross.[26]

The Marianites' anxiety as to their Constitution was gone. Again the Sisters' hearts throbbed with joy and gratitude and they raised their voices in hymns of glad thanksgiving. Soon the sense of security the approbation brought to the Sisters proved a great stimulus to their zeal and devotion. The strict observance of their Rule became more attractive, and the aims, both spiritual and temporal, for which the Congregation was first founded, seemed more sure of realization. An assurance of God's blessing is revealed in the successful development of their institutions opened within the next decade: Saint Charles Academy, Lake Charles, Holy Name of Mary School, Algiers; Sacred Heart Academy, Morgan City. New demands were made upon the Community for teaching personnel from Arnaudville, Louisiana and Ocean Springs, Mississippi. These were met. With accumulated strength of a half-century (1891) of sacrifices and faithful service to the Church, with redoubled fervor, the Sisters approached the closing years of the Nineteenth century animated by the spirit of their venerated Founder.

During the last years of Mother Mary Conception's administration there occurred the death of a religious who, exemplary in the practice of all religious virtues, had endeared herself to all her Sisters so that at the mention of her name unbidden tears would flow. The heroic virtues practiced in obscurity by this true religious, Sister Mary of Saint Bridget (Honorine Cortan) elicited an involuntary feeling of veneration from every member of the community, but it was only when death closed her eyes forever that the veneration and affection, till then hidden in the hearts of her Sisters, was manifested in their tears of regret.[27]

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[26] Letter of Mother Seven Dolors January 6, 1886.

No ambitious desires motivated Sister Mary of St. Bridget when she sought admittance into the ranks of the Marianites. Simple and unlettered, humanly speaking, she had one aim transcendentally high; namely, to attain distinction in virtue, and from this she never for one instant suffered her attention to be diverted during the thirty-five years tha she spent in the Community. The thought of God was ever uppermost in her mind, for she could not converse for any length of time without speaking of holy things, and only on such subjects could she discourse with real interest. Worldly affairs, however, important, only elicited from her a passing attention. She was devoted to the care of the little orphans, and every moment not engaged in this work she spent before the Tabernacle where dwelt the Beloved of her soul.

During the last year of Sister Mary of St. Bridget's life she felt her strength failing, but far from seeking remedies she endeavored to conceal her sufferings from all. As her end drew nigh she pressed more closely to her that life-long cross of physical pain, which she regarded as a sweet pledge of her Savior's love. She spent the days alone in her little room, and though ill, continued to patch the clothes of the little orphans, a task assigned to her as a pastime when she was found too weak to fulfill her obedience as clothes-keeper for these little ones. So industriously did she employ her time that the Sister whom she was charged to help declared that she was an incalculable loss in the mending department. Her desire to be with God was exceedingly ardent. When she knew her end was near, she told a dear friend who, she knew, would miss her: "Do not say one prayer to keep me here any longer." Sister Mary of St. Bridget remains a memory of a spiritual life lived within the happy ranks of the Marianites of Holy Cross.

The Community gained possession of the entire city block, the square on which the convent stands, when Mother Mary Conception acquired sixteen lots of ground located in this square. On November 11, 1885 Mother left Louisiana Province for the Mother House in France to assume her newly-assigned duties as Mistress of Novices. Sister Mary of St. Magdalen (Ellen Langan) who had made profession in New Orleans in the early 'sixties, succeeded to the office of Provincial Superior in Louisiana. During her provincialship, the mission of Saint Alphonsus School in Ocean Springs, Mississippi was opened. This mission was later closed (1912) and reopened in 1927.

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[27] **Chronicles**, M.deS.C., New Orleans, 1883.

CHAPTER FIVE

WITH BANDS OF GOLD

A QUICKER pace in the life of the Sisters was effected when, in 1888, a new Provincial, Sister Mary of St. Cesaria (Mary McDonnell) was elected. Mother Mary of St. Cesaria was to guide the destinies of the Marianites, and especially that of the Academy of Holy Angels for the next seven years. Her love for the Community and her devotedness to each individual member made her revered by all. She advanced the interests of both the girls' and the boys' asylums.

As Provincial, Mother Mary of St. Cesaria opened Saint Joseph School, Arnaudville in 1891, but, because of the shortage of Sisters, it became necessary to close this school in 1919. Under the patronage and title of The Little Flower School, it was reopened in 1947. A zealous and indefatigable worker in the Master's vineyard, the Reverend Daniel Bernard, Pastor of St. Francis Regis Church, Arnaudville, built a new school and dedicated it to the Little Flower. The little school of Saint Joseph had enjoyed a life of twenty-eight years. By a strange coincidence, twenty-eight years had elapsed between the date of its closing and the opening of the new school of the Little Flower.

A second mission opened by Mother Mary of St. Cesaria was that of Sacred Heart Academy, Morgan City, in 1893.

Mother Mary of St. Cesaria's administration had the happy task of directing the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Congregation, 1891. The observance of this event was inaugurated at the Academy of the Holy Angels in a manner worthy of the joyous and sacred character of the occasion. At nine o'clock Tuesday, August 4, 1891, Solemn High Mass was offered in the convent chapel by Very Reverend J. Bogaerts, Vicar General of the diocese, assisted by Reverend Father Ceuppens, rector of St. Theresa's Church, deacon; and Reverend Father Roman, S.M., sub-deacon. Reverend Father Fallon of St. Patrick Church acted as Master of Ceremonies. There were nineteen priests present in the sanctuary, among them Reverend James Hubert Blenk, S.M., later Archbishop of New Orleans. His Grace, Most Reverend Francis Janssens, D.D. presided, while Father D. McKiniry, S.J., delivered an appropriate sermon.

The Golden Jubilee of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross was rightly one of peculiar interest to the people of the South, and of Louisiana in particular, where for more than forty years its members had labored unceasingly in the cause of religion, education, and charity. "In a quiet, unostentatious way the Marianites have kept bravely on, surmounting difficulties and accomplishing works of benediction and mercy, but doing all in the name of Him whose humble followers they are, and of the Blessed Mother whose sorrows are the special contemplation of their Congregation," remarked Father McKiniry, closing his sermon with the following tribute:

> Fifty years have passed. They have fought the good fight in these fifty years of unceasing labor in the Master's service—fifty years of humility, gentleness and charity; fifty years of complete self-abnegation and strict observance of the rules laid down by their holy Founder, and it is meet that the jubilee celebration should be one of calm and holy joy; joy that a great power for good has developed steadily as the years have rolled by, and made its influence felt in many places, its fruits the solace of many lives.[1]

Mother Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona (Haggerty) was elected Provincial Superior December 26, 1895 to succeed Mother Mary of St. Cesaria, whose term had expired. Mother Mary of St. Margaret's work in Franklin, Louisiana, was to be linked with that at Holy Angels Academy. The Academy of the Holy Angels progressed along educational lines under Mother Mary of St. Margaret's direction, though her term of office was only four years. These were trying years in which to undertake the government of any institute. At the close of Mother Mary of St. Cesaria's administration there was prevalent an economic depression (during President Grover Cleveland's term of office) which lasted all through the opening years of Mother Margaret's provincialship, and proved an even greater trial because of the return of yellow fever to the city. Attendance at educational establishments suffered because of the fever and the economic depression. Holy Angels Academy was no exception. However, the chronicler of these years records the fact that Mother Mary of St. Margaret had recourse to the Divine Infant of Prague:

> March 1, 1898—For the greater honor and glory of the Little Infant of Prague, the following is worthy of record: In the month of September, 1897, an image of the Divine Child was presented to Mother Margaret who had it exposed in the chapel inviting all

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[1] **Morning Star** and Catholic Messenger, August 1, 1891, p. 1.

> to invoke this little King in behalf of the Academy. Wonderful to relate, all the new pupils received during that year were of tender age, all bearing some resemblance, more or less marked, to their Infant King. In the month of November two sweet intelligent children, aged respectively five and six, entered as day scholars; a few days later, a dear gentle child of seven came to us as a boarder. On the first day of March by a singular coincidence, both fortunate and unfortunate, an openhearted man accompanied by a gentleman whose daughter was boarding at the Academy, came begging the Superioress to receive his dear little children, the eldest of whom was not seven, and the youngest, not quite two years of age. The good father in his anxiety to provide for his little ones, offered to pay whatever the Superioress would demand. With true fortitude, this poor father tore himself away from his precious little ones, leaving them entirely in the hands of the Superioress who soon found willing hands ready to minister to the wants of these four precious gifts from the Infant of Prague. These children, baptized Episcopalians, had been left more or less to the mercy of strangers, and were altogether ignorant of the existence of God. Now it is beautiful to hear the baby lisping “Little Jesus,” “The Virgie,” and “Papa Joe”. He sometimes enters the sanctuary, takes the little bell, and calling it the ‘Lord’s bell,” goes about the house ringing it with all his might. God grant that the frequent, involuntary but beautiful aspirations uttered by his innocent lips may reach the throne of God and draw down blessings upon the house to which the Infant of Prague brought him.[2]

Mother Mary of St. Margaret had always distinguished herself by her attachment to the Congregation and her devotion to the prosperity of its works, even during the course of her last malady, to which she succumbed April 16, 1899 after ten months of grievous sufferings, the intensity of which was such during the last weeks of her life that those alone who were witnesses could form an idea of them. “It was a veritable martyrdom which this dear victim endured, with a patience and a resignation worthy of the first Christians.[3]

A great number of persons and many members of the clery assisted at her funeral. His Grace, Archbishop Placide Louis Chapelle himself testified his esteem for Mother Mary of St. Margaret, not only by his presence at the funeral service, but also in addressing to the Community a most touching eulogy, recalling Mother Mary of St. Margaret’s ardent piety, her perfect submission to the divine Will and styling her the "Valiant Woman," words which contain the most beautiful and the most consoling panegyric which can be given on the virtues of a religious soul.

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[2] **Chronicles,** M.deS.C., New Orleans Provincial House, March, 1898.

[3] **Circular Letter** from Mother House, Le Mans, giving the obituary.

Mother Mary of St. Margaret's last words were "Jesus Crucified!" She also was crucified, courageous victim whom the Lord had chosen for Himself, and the merit of whose unutterable sufferings, is not personal but redounds to the whole Congregation, particularly to her dear Province of Louisiana for, in the religious family, everything is in common, joys and sorrows, merits and demerits; we are, in some sort jointly and severally responsible.[4]

It is not surprising that during Mother Mary of St. Margaret's Provincialship, which began and ended in the shadow of the Cross, the beautiful stations of the cross and the main altar, on which Calvary's sacrifice is daily renewed, were erected.

Sister Mary of St. Modestus presided over the Louisiana Province in the interim between Mother Mary of St. Margaret's death and the general election when Mother Mary of St. Cesaria was elected again to govern the Province.

From 1873 until her death in 1900, as Superior General or First Assistant General, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors' spiritual vision and practical wisdom guided the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. In January of 1900 the venerable foundress fell critically ill. 'Sickness proves the man," says the **Following of Christ.** What proofs of genuine goodness do we find in the following extract from Sister Marie of Saint Agatha's letter:[5]

> Our lamented Mother gave us, up to the last days of her life, the example of perfect regularity. In spite of the weight of her eighty-two years, she was at meditation every morning. She tried to make things easier for others, but for herself she desired only self-denial and sacrifice to the end. Her exquisite charity, her obedience, her love of our Congregation, guided her without ceasing. When I asked her to think of our Institute when she would be near the good God, she said to me: "I have prayed too much for this intention on earth to forget it in heaven." And when I asked her to bless all her absent daughters, she replied, "Oh, with all my heart!" Her union with our Lord was uninterrupted. And so she longed for the happy moment which would unite her with her Creator. She used to say to those of us who were around her, praying: "My children, since it is the will of God, let me depart."
>
> Twice in the last days of her life, she had the consolation of receiving the blessing and the encouragement of our reverend

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[4] Circular Letter from Le Mans Mother House, giving Mother M. of St. Margaret's obituary.

[5] Letter from Sister Mary of St. Agatha from Le Mans, February 7, 1900, Circular Letter 134.

bishop, for which she was very grateful to His Lordship, to whom she recommended our Institute and added: "If God should restore me to health, I would gladly begin my religious life over again. I do not regret a single day of it."

Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors died on January 29, 1900, at the Mother House in Le Mans. "My daughters," she counseled the weeping Sisters crowded around her deathbed, "remember the rule is a superior who is never absent."[6] The news of her death reached New Orleans through Sister Marie of St. Agatha's letter of February 7. The whole Province was plunged into grief, for the last link with the Founder was severed.

In the fall of 1903 Mother Mary of St. Cesaria (McDonnell) opened a convent in Jennings, Louisiana. As the Catholics there were without a church, the Sisters gave them the use of their large hall for a temporary church. After flourishing for thirteen years, this mission in Jennings had to be abandoned as adequate personnel was lacking. Pleasant are the memories of those who were associated with the Jennings mission.

Mother Mary of St. Cesaria organized the Holy Cross Alumnae Association December 14, 1907 at a meeting called by Mrs. M. E. Szabary, presided over by Mother Mary of St. Cesaria with Miss Delphine Points as Secretary. Reverend A. F. Isenberg, chaplain of the Academy, conveyed to the group hearty and helpful messages from His Grace, Archbishop Hubert Blenk. On March 8, 1908 many of the Holy Cross alumnae from the past forty years were presented to His Excellency, Archbishop Blenk at a reception in the Academy parlor. Stirring was the reminder His Grace gave the newly-organized alumnae in closing his address:

> You believe in the cross, since you have taken as your motto the beautiful symbol of this Order of Holy Cross, "In Cruce Salus." Hold then to the cross, the cross of your Divine Saviour; in the cross is life, light, and salvation; the cross is the ladder by which we ascend to heaven. The cross stands for all that is greatest and holiest and truest in life and purpose—the cross stands for Jesus Christ. Let that Divine Light be your guide. Let it be your strength in the great field of work that lies before you.[7]

The story of Holy Cross Alumnae will have to be left until the chapter dealing with the Academy. Suffice it to say that each year on Homecoming Day the alumnae still gather to renew memories of school days.

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[6] **Superiors General**, II, p. 39, Centenary Chronicles Sisters of the Holy Cross, Holy Cross, Indiana.
[7] **The Morning Star**, March 8, 1908, p. 5.

As the bells of the convent chimed the Angelus Tuesday, January 26, 1908 Mother Mary of St. Modestus, Assistant to the Provincial Superior, Mother Mary of St. Cesaria, passed into the presence of God. With her passing, a great and remarkable life was ended, the life of one who had spent forty years hidden in the enclosure of the convent under a religious name that typified most truly the modesty and genuine worth of her who bore it.[8]

Left an orphan in 1852, Cecilia Clark was placed by her father in St. Mary's Academy at Notre Dame, Indiana, then conducted by the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, and he, himself, became a Brother of the Congregation of Holy Cross. The influence of such pious and devoted association told in the life of the child. Under the Sisters' direction, she grew to the perfect flower of Catholic womanhood, heart and mind and soul expanding, till only the Infinite would satisfy their yearning. Graduating with high honors, Cecilia Clark resolved to devote her life and her God-given talents to His service. At the early age of sixteen she entered the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, making her novitiate in the distant city of New Orleans.

Mother Mary of St. Margaret Cortona instructed and fashioned her for the religious life, as she had also instructed Mother Mary of St. Cesaria, who had entered the year previous to that of Mother Mary of St. Modestus' entrance. The deepest friendship and esteem existed among the three as they labored side by side through the years. When Mother Mary of St. Margaret presided as Provincial she enjoyed the assistance of Mother Mary of St. Modestus; later, Mother Mary of St. Cesaria appointed Mother Mary of St. Modestus as her assistant. All three of these religious rose to the highest positions in the community, and impressed their fine personalities, as few teachers do, upon the lives of the hundreds of students they instructed; all three of them represented the American house at different intervals in the General Council of the order at the Mother House in France.

The secret of Mother Mary of St. Modestus' success as a teacher is reflected in a remark she once made to an old pupil: 'Oh, with what care should not the teacher approach her task; when we remember that we are training immortal souls, fashioned to the image and likeness of God, how holy, how high, how sacred is our vocation."[9] Whether it was a class of little children just beginning their school life, or the graduates about to leave the Academy, Mother Mary of St. Modestus approached her task with devotion and reverence, giving the best of her own great mental endowments, the highest of her own aspirations. She placed, as it were, "the stamp of the Order" upon the graduating classes. Remembering the high standards of the Marianites, she sent forth none who were not worthy to bear that standard with glorious honor, as a sacred privilege, into the avenues of life. Those who were trained by Mother Mary of St. Modestus afterwards esteemed it their highest privilege to have their own daughters reared under her noble supervision.

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[8] The Morning Star, January 30, 1908.

[9] The Morning Star, January 30, 1908.

As both mother and friend to the little orphans, Mother Mary of St. Modestus was both inspiration and benediction to her Sisters in her religious community. Archbishop Blenk, in his beautiful tribute to her, remarked that "She has influenced the life and thought of so many in the community. Her work was indeed for souls and for God."[10] To her pupils Mother Mary of St. Modestus was an ideal so high, so true that even after a lapse of years, when the news went forth that Mother Mary of St. Modestus was dead, from all parts of New Orleans her old students came bearing violets, as modest as her life hidden in God, and laid them upon her heart.

Separated by the span of one year in their entrance to the Community, Mother Mary of St. Modestus and Mother Mary of St. Cesaria were to be parted in death by a single year. On January 27, 1909, Mother Mary of St. Cesaria died. His Grace, Archbishop Hubert Blenk, conducted her burial service. In October of the same year, Mother Mary of the Desert, who had served the community from its earliest foundation in New Orleans, having celebrated her Diamond Jubilee in 1907, followed Mother to the grave. The last of the pioneers was gone, for every Sister who served the community during its first twenty-five years was a pioneer, while those enrolled under its years of growth were builders. The few remaining older members were not, strictly speaking, of the original pioneers who had paved the way for the future Marianites.

On July 6, 1909, the newly-elected Mother Provincial, Sister Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan), former Superior of the St. Charles Academy, Lake Charles, arrived and was received by the Sisters from the country missions and the city houses. Mother Mary of St. Raphael's term as Provincial Superior was marked by progress in every line of educational endeavor.

The disasters of tropical storm and of fire added heavy burdens to Mother Mary of St. Raphael's administration. The Academy of the Holy Angels was severely damaged, as was practically every mission, by the severe storm of September, 1909.

Mother Mary of St. Raphael's administration witnessed the inauguration of special Normal classes in practice teaching and educational courses that meet the present requirements. Remarkable in her powers of imparting knowledge and of correlating her subjects, Mother Mary of St. Raphael was an excellent teacher. She had a way of reaching the hearts and minds of her pupils. Her **forte** was History, with which she beautifully correlated Geography and Literature, running the thread of interest through all her instructions. Brilliant of mind and ideal as an educator, Mother Mary of St. Raphael also possessed the power of developing the womanly characters of those entrusted to her care.

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[10] The Morning Star, January 30, 1908.

Mother Mary of St. James (Marguerite Dooley) replaced Mother Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan) in June, 1913. Both the new Provincial Superior and her immediate predecessor celebrated their silver jubilees on August 3, 1913. During the course of the following month Mother Mary of the Archangels, the Superior General, who had many friends and former pupils in Louisiana, died in France. By appointment from the Cardinal Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious at Rome, the vacancy was filled by the Assistant Mother General, Sister Mary of St. Mechtilda (Josephine Schwartz of New Orleans,) until the General Chapter was convened in October, 1915. Sister Mary of St. Mechtilda, who had served the Louisiana Province for a number of years, was invested with the necessary powers to govern the Congregation.

Mother Mary of St. James served two additional terms of office, and did much towards modernizing the community property. She raised the educational standards of the Holy Cross establishments, and this despite the devastating effects of the terrific hurricane of September 29, 1915:

> The twenty-ninth of September, 1915, will remain a well-remembered day in the annals of New Orleans' Provincial House. A terrific storm swept over the city. At five o'clock in the afternoon the velocity of the wind was one hundred twenty miles per hour. In its wake there was nothing but desolation and ruin. The Catholic churches and institutions suffered immensely. The amount of damage to our property has been estimated at thousands of dollars, and it has taken the entire session to restore the property to order. We have, however, much for which to be grateful. God in His mercy has been wonderfully generous to us, and has enabled us to make these repairs and necessary improvements without incurring debt.[11]

Previous to this storm, on May 15, 1915 the grotto in honor of Our Lady of Grace was erected, and on June 14, 1915 the first unfurling of our national flag took place. For more than a quarter of a century the beautiful emblem of our nation has floated over the campus at Holy Angels close by our Lady's grotto as it were a guardian of the religious liberties guaranteed by our country's Constitutions.

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[11] Chronicles of the Marianites of New Orleans. 1915.

State recognition of the Holy Cross diploma was secured from the Louisiana Department of Education in 1916.[12] The nuns began at this time to attend Loyola University in order to attain normal credits and degrees. Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans, who succeeded Mother Mary of St. James as head of the province of Louisiana, attended Loyola University with Mother Mary of St. James, giving the sisters an example of humility. Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans carried out Mother Mary of St. James' policy of improving and expanding the Congregation's activities. She erected the present auditorium at the Academy of the Holy Angels, which houses the up-to-date cafeteria used by the students, as well as the Music Department. Many successful financial transactions were negotiated during this administration, notably the sale of the Schwartz property acquired during Mother Mary of St. Cesaria's provincialship and the floating of a loan that made possible the modernizing of St. Francis de Sales Academy, Houma, Louisiana.

Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans (Quilter) made a comfortable home for the Sisters out of the old Immaculate Conception orphanage. Large, airy porches provide relief from the heat during the summer months, the one on the first floor being so conveniently graded as to make it possible for the aged and infirm Sisters to be wheeled into the chapel with ease from the nearby infirmary.

Always thoughtful of the suffering and aged members of the community, Mother Mary of St. Berchmans had the old "white house", referred to in a previous chapter as the novitiate, renovated. Roomy and cheerful rooms for the sick Sisters were arranged, modern equipment installed and Sisters detailed for special care of these Sisters.

At one time, Mother's thought of the Sisters caused her to plan a covered passage-way from the Academy to the chapel so that none might suffer needlessly from the inclemency of the weather. At another time, a new and commodious novitiate was provided by adding a third floor to the Sisters' Home. The ancient six-foot fence to the rear of the Academy, severely damaged by the 1915 storm, was pulled down and the grounds were enclosed with the present brick parapet surmounted by iron railings. A hand-wrought trellis of iron spans the gateway, and supports quaint lights, replicas of those used in the French Quarters of New Orleans in colonial days. A cedar walk intersects paved walks which stretch from the Academy proper to the Gymnasium, to our Lady's Grotto, to the newly-erected Sacred Heart grotto, thence to the gateway.

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[12] Mentioned in the **Morning Star** of 1916, 1918, and 1919.

From Le Mans Mother House, January 29, 1917 Reverend Mother Mary of St. Matthew, Superior General, informed the members of the Louisiana Province in Circular Letter 222, that in a few weeks from that date:

> We will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the great blessing bestowed on our Congregation by the First Canonical Approbation of our Constitutions, which had been submitted to the examination of the Holy See by our Reverend Father Founder. His Reverence asked the concurrence of the prayers of all his daughters for the success of his desired petition. Heaven heard these prayers and vouchsafed the wishes of our Venerated Father in according this inestimable favor which was the crown of his life of trials and sacrifices.
>
> Eternal thanks be then rendered to the most holy Mother of our Lord, our Lady of the Seven Dolors, by whom we received those great consolations on the day upon which the church celebrates the memory of the sufferings of her Divine Son. The decree of approbation dated Tuesday, February 19, 1867, feast of the prayer of Our Lord in the Garden was not remitted to us before the following Tuesday, feast of the Commemoration of the Passion. Our Lord from His cross giving to us His most precious graces. My dear Daughters, I would have been happy to celebrate this day by a solemn thanksgiving, the word jubilee signifying "joy" but because of the painful circumstances under which our dear country is passing[13] no soul is in joy, the recollection of prayer and a fervent communion are the only things suitable for the manifestation of our religious gratitude.
>
> On this day, the seventeenth anniversary of the death of our Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, our Foundress of pious memory, I should like to quote to you the exhortations she directed to our Sisters on that blessed event. May they be for everyone of us an encouragement to follow the road which her kind and maternal hand pointed out to her dearest daughters:
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> Now more than ever must we continue to have recourse to the disposer of the celestial gifts to obtain the grace to correspond with the serious obligations of gratitude towards our Holy Mother the Church for the notable favor of her approbation; obligations of pious respect, of humble obedience and of inviolable fidelity to our Holy Rules which are the manifestation of God's Will to our

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[13] First World War, 1917.

> religious family all the members of which must remain united in the same Way, the same Truth, and the same Life.[14]
>
> Let us then enter with all our heart that royal way of the Cross where we are preceded by so many holy Founders, so many eminent orders which we have made profession to follow in renunciation of ourselves and of the world in order to be able to gain the eternal reward. May those to whom our Divine Master gave the grace to sanctify themselves by the easy way of obedience show their gratitude, their spirit of faith, and by the most confident abandonment of themselves to God, avoiding all that would grieve their Superiors having their eyes always fixed on the Incarnate Word Who became a child to obey from His birth, and a Victim to obey until His death. Without that supernatural life that bond of charity which makes saints where would our merit be? Notwithstanding our number, our efforts, and our apparent success, we would be before the Lord but a shadow of a religious community and we would not be long in returning to nothingness without having been useful to the Holy Church and our dear Congregation.

After the receipt of this Circular the Community recited the **Te Deum** and the **Magnificat** as acts of praise and thanksgiving to God for His great blessing in the approbation of the Congregation, the fiftieth anniversary of which was being recalled. With filial affection, the Sisters remembered in their Mass and Communion the Sovereign Pontiffs, Pope Pius IX and Pope Leo XIII, and the Cardinals Protectors of the Congregation, uniting piously the names of the Very Reverend Basil Moreau and Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors with those to whom they felt indebted for this blessing.

In this period following World War I, the Jesuit priests at Loyola University of the South, New Orleans, Louisiana, are entitled to every honor ever bestowed on pioneer educators. They were the ones to blaze the trail of collegiate paths to be trod by the religious of the State. They were the ones who made it possible to have the religious teachers of Louisiana state-certified, so that their schools would be recognized and standardized equally with secular institutions. Father Francis X. Twellmeyer, S.J., aided by a sympathetic and noble band of secular women teachers, made possible the strange departure from study within convent walls to study within university halls. Pioneers they were in placing university honors within the grasp of the Sisters, even the cloistered orders. Pioneers they were, and brave ones at that, for they fought not tangible dangers, but those of the spirit, those of malicious intolerance. Never should the names of men like Reverend F. D. Sullivan, S.J., Reverend J. C. Kearns, S.J., and Reverend Francis X. Twellmeyer, S.J. be forgotten by Catholic Louisianians, much less by the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. To them Louisiana parochial and private schools and academies owe their present-day standards.

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[14] Quoted from Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors' letter promulgating the Coonstitutions in 1886.

Success crowned the Sisters' efforts. At the Loyola University Graduation exercises in the summer of 1922 the first Marianites to receive Bachelor of Arts diplomas participated. Through the years since that memorable date, the Marianites have been able to send forth new teachers equipped as only those can be who have followed the **Ratio Studiorum** under the sons of Saint Ignatius.

Mother Mary of St. Liguori (M. Eulalie Mazerat) accompanied by Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans (Honora Quilter) and Sister Mary of St. Rose (Leea A. Trepagnier) arrived at Holy Angels September 24, 1927 after having attended the General Chapter of the Community held at the Mother House, Précigné, Sarthe, France. Mother Mary of St. Liguori (Mazerat) was elected to succeed Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans, and having been Mistress of Novices for the span of fifteen years, was well acquainted with the needs of her community. Mother Mary Liguori's first endeavors were to assist the young Sisters. She spent hours in conference with the State educational authorities in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, relative to securing certificates for a number of Sisters. The question of accrediting Holy Cross Normal College, New Orleans, was also considered. Two days later, August 20, 1931, Mr. J. C. Lombard, delegated by the State Board of Education, arrived to inspect the normal college. Within the space of three weeks a letter from Mr. T. H. Harris, State Superintendent of Education informed Mother Mary Liguori that the Commission on Education recommended the Marianites' Normal College for accrediting.

Mother Mary Liguori revived the office of Local Superior, to which office she assigned Sister Mary of St. Francis Xavier (Margaret Mary Haggerty) Superior of St. John Academy, Franklin, and formerly Superior of the Holy Name of Mary School, Algiers. Many of the activities in the Parochial and High Schools conducted by the Marianites, especially those at Holy Angels, were inaugurated by Sister Mary Xavier. It was through her zeal as Local Superior that Our Lady's Sodality was reorganized in the Academy; that the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade was established, and that contribution to the religious, the cultural, and the recreational life of Holy Angels' students was added; namely, **Catholic pageantry.**

November 27, 1931 the Reverend Mother General, (Mother Mary of St. Eleonore) resigned and a Convocation of a General Chapter was made, the chapter to be held in February, 1932. Mother Mary of St. Liguori, Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans, and Sister Mary Xavier left for France. On March 26, 1932, a Circular Letter announcing the election of Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty) to the Provincialship was received. The news was greeted with joy, but not without its shadow of sorrow for Mother Mary Liguori was obliged to remain in France, having been elected Assistant to the new Mother General, Mother Mary of St. Julien.

Mother Mary Xavier received telegrams of congratulation and assurances of love and fidelity from the Sisters, who were unable to attend the assembly upon her arrival. Immediately she entered upon her duties as Provincial, inaugurating activities whose scope was broad and comprehensive—activities affecting her community at large and the Academy of the Holy Angels in particular.

Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien (Le Roux) who assumed office as General Superior at the same time as the Provincial administrators (1932-1946) had a clearer insight into the needs of the Louisiana Province than any other Superior General was ever able to have, because of her close association with the Sisters for several years. She made her profession in France in 1893 and came to Louisiana shortly afterwards. Thus she spent her first years of religious life among the members of this Province, fulfilling at different intervals the offices of prefect of boarders at the Academy of the Holy Angels and the Assistant Mistress of Novices at the Provincial House. Two memorable visits of this dearly-loved Mother General were enjoyed by the community, one in December, 1933, and another in 1939. On both occasions Mother Mary of St. Julien spoke in glowing terms of the religious dispositions of the Sisters of the Province and of the excellent discipline and large enrollments in all the schools.

At the time of her first visit, December 21, 1933, a surprisingly large delegation of the Alumnae assembled in the parlors of the Academy to extend a cordial welcome to Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien and to present to her a substantial gift. Reverend Mother was deeply touched as many of her old friends and pupils were among those welcoming her. The officers of the Alumnae escorted her to the auditorium where the Sophomore class presented a very pretty Christmas play dedicating it to Reverend Mother.

No higher tribute to the administration (1932-38) could be expressed than that contained in the report of this visit made by Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien:

> I cannot express the happiness I experienced on witnessing the union which exists among the members of the Provincial Council

> who cooperate so wonderfully with Mother Provincial; the burden of her responsibility is very heavy, but it can be lightened and blessed by the faithful cooperation of devoted co-laborers. I wish to express my deep thanks and appreciation to the Provincial Councillors for their loving, loyal support and assistance to their devoted Mother Provincial who is so solicitous for both the spiritual and temporal welfare of all her Sisters and so worthy of their consideration and esteem. . . . This example of loyalty and devotedness is reflected throughout the entire house by the spirit of union and charity which so clearly manifests itself among the members of the community whose mutual love prompts them to bear and forbear, and thus scatter around them the sunshine of peace and happiness.[15]

Similar tributes were given by Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien after her visit to the province in 1939, at this time impressing upon the Sisters the words of St. John Chrysostom: "What is greater than to instruct and direct the young in the knowledge of God! Far above the painter or any other artist do I place him who truly knows how to form young hearts to God."[16]

The Christmas Triduum was initiated by Mother Mary Xavier in the second year of her administration, 1933, when the Sisters spent the three days following the Feast of Christmas meditating on divine love. Through the years 1932-1948 the Sisters have been privileged to enjoy these three days of grace at the mid-term, renewing their fervor for the New Year. Sustained spiritually, and refreshed, the Sisters return to their duties fortified to continue the fulfillment of them.

Writing from the Mother House, Précigné, France, June 16, 1934, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien urged the Sisters to spread devotion to their heavenly patroness, Our Lady of Seven Dolors:

> Seeing the Blessed Virgin honored under her glorious titles of Immaculate Conception, Our Lady of Perpetual Succor, etc. we are inspired with the idea that we ought to endeavor to make known the title under which we are consecrated to her, that of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors.
>
> Our Venerated Father Founder had established a confraternity in her honor, but trials arose and this devotion, so dear to his heart, fell into disuse. We thought of reviving and propagating it among our pupils, patients, relatives and friends. Our good Mother, so often left alone at the foot of the cross, will rejoice upon seeing souls constantly increasing in number keeping her company and compassionating in her sufferings.

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[15] Act of Visit, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien, 1934.

[16] Act of Visit, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien, 1939.

> When, in a family, a child breaks her mother's heart by its ingratitude or misconduct, her brothers and sisters redouble their kindness and affection towards this afflicted mother; so we, the privileged children of Mary, ought by our love and zeal in propogating devotion to her, draw out the sword with which sinners daly pierce her heart, a sword that, perhaps, we too have driven in! And as a child likes to make known his mother's sorrows, in order to draw consolers to her, so we shall endeavor to gather around Mary disconsolate the little ones, whose souls are so pure and whose hearts are so easily moved.
>
> The poor, the sick, the afflicted, moreover, will find in the consideration of their Mother's sorrow, and with her help, strength to bear their crosses with resignation and perfect abandonment to the Holy Will of God.
>
> This consoling devotion is but little known. What an honor for us to have been chosen by God to spread it, and what a happiness to be able to make Mary loved under the touching title of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, a title that ought to be dear to all the Marianites!
>
> I am convinced that our dear Mother, in return, will bless our works and inspire vocations among our pupils who will thus faithfully keep her company at the foot of the Cross. The renewal of devotion to our holy patroness that this Association will bring to us personally, will help us to bear our sufferings and fatigues in the care of the children or of the sick and in our different employments, often so burdensome. Onward, then, my dear daughters, and let each one of you put her whole heart and soul in it. Mary will recompense you.
>
> You will find on the leaflets we are sending you the statutes of the Association. Each morning after Mass the Communities shall recite seven Ave Marias with Sancta Mater and three times the invocation, "Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, Refuge of sinners and Help of the Afflicted, pray for us." When the children are present, the Ave Marias will be said in the native tongue. In the evening, the fifth Septain of the beads shall be said for the intentions of the Associates.[17]

This beautiful devotion to Our Lady of Seven Dolors flourishes at the Provincial House and the missions in Louisiana. With it is linked the devotion of the Founder to the Holy Face, for which the prayer is recited after the seven Hail Marys in honor of Our Lady of Seven Dolors.

New Orleans' eighth Archbishop, Most Reverend John William Shaw, died November 2, 1934. Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., Bishop of Omaha, was chosen to replace him. Upon the arrival of the new Archbishop in New Orleans May 15, 1935, pupils from the Sixth Grade through the High-School Department marched in the procession which formed on Canal Street and escorted His Excellency to the stand which had been erected near the Cathedral from which His Excellency viewed the procession. Holy Angels' Band headed one of the units in the parade. Later, in recalling the scene of the arrival of His Excellency, Monsignor W. P. Wynhoven, in an address at Holy Name of Mary Church, Algiers[18] remarked:

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[17] Letter from Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien June 16, 1934.

> The other day when the new Archbishop was brought to the foot of Canal Street, I was on the yacht with him. I have known him for many years. I know his qualifications for the great work before him. I understand his brilliancy of mind; still, all that did not mean as much to me as what I noticed on that boat. In all the turmoil (whistles blowing, bells ringing) he stood near the rail, and I patted him on the shoulder, saying, "Archbishop, how do you like it?" He turned his face to me—he had tears streaming down his cheeks! It was then that I concluded that we are going to have a wonderful Archbishop because he has a **heart—He feels—He can be affected!**[19]

That His Excellency had a great feeling for his flock was soon demonstrated by the manner in which he spent himself in their behalf. Graduation Exercises were scheduled at the Holy Angels Academy for May 30. The afternoon previous to this the Sisters and pupils worked diligently decorating the campus and the auditorium for the occasion as the newly-installed Archbishop was to preside. Garlands of white and yellow roses were strung from tree to tree and from post to post, outlining the walk along which His Excellency would pass in order to enter the Academy building. The Episcopal coat of arms was displayed at the entrance of the Academy as well as that of the Auditorium.

The Sisters had assembled and lined both sides of the walk extending from the St. Claude entrance to the Auditorium; the children in uniform and wearing a purple badge continued the line to the Academy and into the first hall as far as the archway. They were joined by the graduates in white cap and gown with corsage bouquets of orchid and silver.

The Academy Band, in uniform, escorted His Excellency to the building where the priests were assembled ready to participate in the procession with the graduates to the chapel. As soon as the Archbishop reached the chapel door, the choir, composed of the High-

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[18] On the occasion of Rev. Thomas Larkin's Golden Jubilee

[19] Monsignor P. M. Wynhoven's address at Rev. Thomas Larkin, S.M.'s Golden Jubilee, Holy Name of Mary Church, Algiers, 1935.

School pupils under the direction of Miss Helen McGrath, began the **Ecce Sacerdos.** High Mass was sung by Reverend Michael Larkin, S.M., President of Notre Dame Seminary. The Chaplain, Reverend Michael Dunn, O.F.M., was Master of Ceremonies. Reverend James A. Greeley, S.J., Dean of Loyola University preached the graduation sermon. After the Mass, His Excellency conferred the diplomas —a very great privilege for the Sisters and the graduating class. The relatives and friends of the graduates felt highly honored to be able to enjoy the interesting and encouraging talk which the newly-installed Archbishop gave after conferring the diplomas. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament closed the Graduation exercises.

After the chapel exercises, His Excellency and the members of the clergy, twenty-two in number, repaired to the auditorium where the pupils tendered a very beautiful reception of welcome to His Excellency, presenting him with a spiritual bouquet. His Excellency expressed deep appreciation of their gift. This was the last feature of the program, so the Archbishop, with his priests, returned to the priest's dining room for dinner. Because of this singular privilege granted to the Sisters and the pupils of Holy Angels Academy, May 30, 1935 has been recorded as one outstanding in the history of the Academy. Every year since His Excellency's advent to New Orleans, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D. has honored the graduating class of Holy Angels with his presence at their Commencement exercises, doubling the honor by permitting it to occur on the anniversary of his elevation to the Episcopate.

Just as God returns every morning a new page of life upon which each living being might write glorious deeds, the administration which went into office March 26, 1932 (and repeated itself twice) turned each day of those years into a glorious and shining page in the Marianites' history. The Provincial Councillors cooperated with the Provincial Superior, Mother Mary Xavier, in floating a bond issue in 1935 in the midst of a financial depression and on the very brink of World War II, to erect Saint Joseph's Hall, new and comfortable living quarters for the Sisters. Such an undertaking called for patient perseverance. To the credit of the administration and that of the loyal Marianite Superiors of the branch establishments throughout the State, who came nobly to the aid of the Provincial House, Mother Mary Xavier had the happiness of seeing the Province's entire indebtedness lifted in 1944.[20]

October 14, 1935 Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., officiated at the ceremony of the laying and blessing of the cornerstone of this new home. His Excellency discussed, in his address, the three purposes of Catholic education, the spiritual development, mental progress and cultural attainments of the Sisters. Reverend George J. McNamara, C.S.C. of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, New Orleans, told of the Sisters' devotion through the yellow fever epidemics, of their zeal as teachers of Catechism along the bayous of Louisiana, and of their sacrifices during the War between the States. Holy Cross College Band supplied the music under the direction of the Reverend Brother Titus, C.S.C. The Academy students sang the Benediction, which was given on the campus.

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[20] Charter Book, Marianites of Holy Cross, New Orleans, p.——.

The feast of Saint Joseph in 1937 had a two-fold significance for the Community. Besides the usual celebration of the great feast of the Community's patron, there was the ceremony on this day of the blessing of St. Joseph's Hall by His Excellency, Archbishop Rummel. After celebrating Holy Mass at which the Sisters and the students received Communion, His Excellency received the Sisters' felicitations for his feast in the Community room of the new building. After blessing the new residence, His Excellency was conducted to the auditorium where the pupils extended to him a loving welcome, and assured their devoted Shepherd of their deep affection and gratitude while offering him Feast-day greetings. In addressing the children, the Archbishop expressed his appreciation for this and various other tokens of affection they had tendered him during the year.

The new faculty residence, St. Joseph's Hall, is a brick structure facing Saint Claude Avenue, and connecting several buildings of the Holy Cross Unit—the Academy, the auditorium, the chapel, and the Provincial House by lovely cloister walks. In the cool of the summer evenings, nothing is more pleasant for the Sisters who are preparing matter for their summer-school classes, than the walk which the upper cloister provides. Here they may discuss together their mutual lecture notes, share their knowledge, their pleasures and their work. Such is the true family spirit of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross and the union and cooperation that exists among them. In this distinctive community spirit they truly reflect the charity the Founder exhorted them to practice when he wrote:

> A work of charity is like a great palace, and is not built by a single man nor made of a single stone, but each one does his share; each stone is shaped according to the place it must occupy and each piece of wood is arranged and placed so as to fit into the whole. Union is, therefore, a powerful lever with which the whole world could be moved, directed and sanctified. My dear Daughters, the spiritual and material development of our dear Congregation depends upon every one of us. The more we shall

be united, the more subjects God will send us to continue our works and to procure His glory. [21]

Mother Mary Xavier, upon the expiration of her first term of office, left for New York July 3, 1938, **en route** to France to partipate in the General Chapter. Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans, Sister Mary of St. Adrian and Sister Mary of St. Cajetan accompanied Mother Provincial. Besides the large number of Sisters at the Provincial House for summer school, the Sisters from the city missions also assembled at the Provincial House to bid their Mother and Sisters farewell for a few months. From the Community Room the Sisters repaired to the chapel where the prayers of the itinerary were recited. Then with heavy hearts all watched Mother and the Sisters depart for New York.

On July 7 a telegram was received informing the community that Mother Provincial was ill and unable to sail that day with the two deputies, Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans and Sister Mary of St. Adrian. Sister Mary of St. Cajetan remained at the French Hospital with Mother Provincial who still entertained hope of sailing later, but God willed it otherwise. Mother's condition did not permit her to consider the trip to France at all. The idea was abandoned entirely. Her devoted Sisters in Louisiana spent many anxious hours over Mother's condition until the news was received of her improvement.

July 22, 1938 the news of Mother Mary Xavier's re-election came with that of the re-election of Mother Mary of St. Julien as Superior General. The Sisters offered prayers of thanksgiving to God and immediatelly conveyed the congratulations of all the Sisters to Mother Provincial. These assurances of love and fidelity from her Sisters at this time of great physical suffering were truly consoling to Mother. All hearts were gladdened September 27 upon her return to the Province.

An old community custom revived at this time by Mother Mary Xavier was that of singing the litany of the Blessed Virgin every Saturday evening. This practice began in Le Mans at the College of Our Lady of Holy Cross in the year 1842 when the faculty and students of the College sang the litany in gratitude for preservation from fire and for full civil liberty granted them for teaching. There are those among the members of the Community who can remember being "transported to heaven" as it were, when Mother Provincial would ascend the steps to the choir loft and play the litany for the community.

Possessed of an out-of-the-ordinary gift of song as well as great talent for music, the organ, piano and violin, Mother Mary Xavier devoted her energies, as Assistant Provincial to the training of the Sisters' choir in Solfeggio. She carried out the **Motu Proprio** of Pope Pius X regulating the use of Church music. Mother succeeded in blending harmoniously the Sisters' voices in the glorious liturgy of the Church. For the Friday afternoon services held in the Academy chapel in honor of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, Mother confided to no one the choir, but directed it herself, so wholeheartedly did she throw herself into promoting devotion to our Sorrowful Mother.

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[21] Excerpts from the writings of our Father Founder.

When the duties of the Provincialship denied Mother the time to continue this work, she secured the services of Miss Helen McGrath, and later the community organist, Sister Mary of St. Bartholomew (Durand), under the direction of Reverend Robert Stahl, S.M., continued the work begun by Mother Mary Xavier. On the major feast days the Community delights in hearing the choir sing **a capella** many beautiful hymns.

Ever zealous for the spiritual as well as the physical and material advancement ot the community, the administration erected a handsome grotto on the front campus in 1934 in honor of Our Lady of Lourdes. After the construction of this grotto, a very beautiful family custom arose of making a pilgrimage to the grotto of Our Lady after supper every evening, singing the Lourdes hymn, reciting the prayers to Our Immaculate Mother, and closing the ceremony with an invocation of her little protegée, Saint Bernadette Soubirous. During clear weather, the evening recreation is opened in this manner. When the weather does not permit, the Sisters gather about Our Lady's statue in the Community room to perform this devotion in her honor. This daily tribute to Our Lady is appropriate, indeed, as it was under her title of "Immaculate Conception" that the Marianites' first residence was dedicated.

Two imposing public tributes were paid to Our Lady by the Marianites of Holy Cross, one in 1937 when Mother Mary Xavier personally directed and presented the inspiring, massive production, the **Lourdes** pageant, on the Academy grounds. A second tribute on May 12, 1946, formed the prelude to the consecration of the Archdiocese to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Mother Mary Xavier presented a pageant in honor of Our Lady of Fatima, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, under the title of **Fatima—A Torch to the World.** In conformity with the wishes expressed by Our Lady in her apparitions at Fatima, Portugal, and in compliance with the repeated recommendations of His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, Most Reverend Archbishop Rummel thought it opportune in May, 1946, to consecrate the New Orleans Archdiocese to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Holy Angels Academy was asked to present a pageant depicting the story of Fatima as a prelude to this important Archdiocesan event. The aim of the production was to lift Fatima's torch to the world so that all might see and heed the call of Our Lady to make reparation to Divine Justice. The story of the three little shepherd children of Portugal, Lucia dos Santos, Jacinta, and Francisco Marto, to whom the Blessed Virgin appeared May 13, 1917, on the outskirts of Fatima, formed the basis of the pageant.

Mother Mary Xavier and her faculty of the Academy of the Holy Angels dedicated the pageant to the Blessed Mother of God, our Lady of Fatima, Queen of the Most Holy Rosary. In announcing the pageant to the audience, Reverend Vernon P. Aleman explained:

> We have entitled the pageant **Fatima—A Torch to the World** because today Fatima is truly a lighted torch while illumines Portugal and the whole world with its rays. All were exhorted to join the participants in spirit in offering prayers that the minds of men might be enlightened with the bright light of Faith and their hearts inflamed with the purifying flames of devotion and love of Our Lady of Fatima.[22]

Devotion to Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima was further stimulated at Holy Angels Academy during the **triduum** held in her honor February 7th through February 9th, 1948. It was inspiring to see the effect that the presence of this replica of the statue of Our Lady of Fatima had upon all who attended the devotions in her honor under this new title.

When the status was received at the Academy the first Saturday of February, the seventh day of the month, a living rosary was formed by the Grade children while high-school pupils of the Academy preceded this rosary formation into the chapel. Those who formed the cross and represented the Our Fathers bore lighted candles in their hands, while those representing the Hail Marys carried white carnations. After the students comprising this living rosary had recited five decades of the rosary, the prayer to Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima was said. Reverend Felix F. Miller, Pastor of St. Francis Xavier Church in Metairie road, addressed the Congregation giving an account in detail of the manner in which he came into possession of the lovely delicately-tinted statue from one of his parishioners, the Portuguese Consul, Mr. Louis Cavalho, while the consul and his wife were traveling in Portugal in 1947. Father Miller stressed the fact that this statue is exactly like the one residing in the Basilica over the spot where the apparations occurred. He called attention to the fact that it was carved from Brazilian cedar, and that the Spanish carver had very skillfully inserted semi-precious gems, amethysts, rubies, diamonds, into the robe of Our

Lady. A very handsome reliquary formed the base for the statue. This contained some leaves from the bush upon which Our Lady stood during the apparitions and some of the soil from around this bush. This reliquary, as well as the solid gold filigree fifteen-decade rosary, was the gift of Mrs. Carvalho, who also gave the crown of twelve solid silver stars.

The stand on which the statue rested had been given by the Portuguese Consul by Dom José Alves Correia da Silva,[22] the Bishop of Leiria, Portugal, who had blessed and indulgenced the statue before it was shipped to the United States. This statue was carried in procession before 10,000 people to the port from which it was shipped. When it was received in January, 1948, it was taken to His Excellency's[23] residence where it remained over night. Then it was received at the St. Louis Cathedral where a novena was conducted in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima. The statue was taken to various other churches and shrines[24] in the City and State before it was brought to Holy Angels Academy. After relating these details in his sermon, Reverend Father Miller gave Solemn Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. He was assisted by Reverend Joachim Markus, O.F.M., chaplain of the Academy, and Reverend Bartholomew Shaughnessy, S.S.J.

On Sunday, February 8, Saturday's ceremony was repeated; this time, the High-school girls formed the living rosary, instead of the Grade children. Reverend James W. Courtney, S.J., delivered the sermon, which is quoted **verbatim:**

> The Son of God became man and for 30 years passed His life in obscurity. After 30 years had passed, He then began His 3 years of public ministry. In those 3 years He accomplished the redemption of mankind. Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima for 30 years remained hidden and obscure. When 30 years had passed, she then began her public ministry, and for that reason we are hearing a great deal these days and times about Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima.
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> Last May 13, 1947, which was the 30th anniversary of the first apparition of Our Blessed Mother to the three little children of Fatima in Portugal, His Excellency, Dom Jose Alves Correia da Silva, the Bishop of Leiria, in whose diocese Fatima lies, blessed a statue like the one we are privileged to honor today, and at the instigation of Sister Lucy of the Seven Dolors, he sent that

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[22] **Our Lady of Fatima Magazine** of January, 1948 styles the Bishop of Leiria a "living martyr" of the anti-Catholic revolution of 1910 in Portugal. As a young priest then he was forced to stand for many hours in icy water Owing to this cruel treatment, which seriously affected his legs, every exertion for him is followed by pains.

[23] Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., Archbishop of New Orleans.

[24] This statue was enshrined February 29, 1948 permanently at St. Francis Xavier Church.

Our Lady of Fatima Shrine

statue on a pilgrimage towards the western confines of Russia. Everywhere it went, Catholics and Non-Catholics alike received it with great acclaim and honor, and miracles too numerous to mention followed in the wake of the pilgrimage.

Last October 13, 1947, which was the 30th anniversary of this last apparition of Our Blessed Mother to those little children, the Bishop of Leiria blessed another statue and sent it on its Westward way towards Russia, and this is the statue that was received by hundreds of thousands of people first in Canada, then in the Dioceses of Buffalo, Albany, Brooklyn. That statue is slowly making its way toward the western shores of our country on the way to the Eastern boundary of Russia. I cannot say the role that these two statutes will play when they meet on the boundaries East and West of that great country, Russia, but I think Our Blessed Mother's words will then be verified: **Russia will be converted!** But before that takes place there will have to be many a prayer for that event. You know Our Blessed Mother appeared on the 13th day of each month, May through October, 1917, and the mandate she gave to the little children was, 'Say the rosary. Say the beads. Pray the rosary." Many a prayer and a sacrifice will have to be offered. The little children were confused and Lucy, who was only 10 at the time asked the beautiful Lady, "Who are you, and what do you want?" "I want you to come here on the 13th day of each month for six successive months," Our Lady replied.

July 13, 1917, was the most momentous of these occasions, because it was on that occasion Our Blessed Lady vouchsafed a vision to the children of souls suffering in hell. Had not the beauty of Our Lady and her presence supported them, they would have died from the sight. Then she promised that in October, "I will work a miracle proving who I am." It was a miracle that nobody on the face of the earth could doubt—that of the revolving sun.

Remember, Our Lady told them, "Sacrifice yourself for sinners. The reason why so many souls go to hell is because they have nobody to make sacrifices or to pray for them." To each and every one of us Our Lady gives that mandate to pray for souls' salvation and to make sacrifices. We are entering upon the period of Lent, which is a period of sacrifice. Sacrifice **keynotes** the Holy Season of Lent—mortification, self-denial. Sister Lucy, who is about 40 years of age now, and is a member of the Sisters of St. Dorothy, was the one out of the group of three children to whom Our Lady gave this message.

What did Our Blessed Lady mean when she spoke of sacrifice? She explained very clearly what she meant. Our Blessed Lady meant simply that we are to deny ourselves the things we would like to have but can only have at the expense of offending Almighty God, and without that minimum of sacrifice no one of us can expect to save his soul: That book which would be against faith or morals and you would like to read it— 'No! in honor of Our Blessed Lady's Immaculate Heart, I will not read it." That picture which would involve danger for your soul—Don't go to that show. Deny yourself! That companion in sin—Deny such companionship. That was the message of July 13, **Prayer, the rosary, sacrifice.**

The rosary was the instrument of the world's salvation for centuries. It is the very same rosary that we recite. As we look about us and ponder over conditions that prevail, the picture is at best hopeless—truly hopeless. Mankind can not of itself lift itself out of the chaos into which it has been plunged in our time. Only a miracle of God's grace can save the world from destruction, and that miracle of God's grace is promised through Our Lady of Fatima's intercession.

Our Most Reverend Archbishop Rummel consecrated our New Orleans Archdiocese to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in May, 1946. It remains for us to supply the necessary prayers that will bring about that miracle; namely, **the conversion of Russia.** Cannot you imagine what a world power that will be, what a boon it will be to mankind if Russia is converted? Don't smile at the suggestion. Our Lady told us it will be converted, and this is not any more impossible than it was for pagan Rome to accept the standards of the Cross. Rome was converted, and Our Blessed Mother assures us that Russia will be converted if only we pray the beads, sacrifice ourselves for the salvation of souls. There is the mandate that is imposed upon each and everyone of us. If the conversion of Russia is slow in coming, it is only because we are slow in praying. Now we must carry out the request of Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima. It is like a second Redemption. Our Blessed Mother laid down this program, and I am sure most of you are going to carry it out. Say Our Blessed Mother's rosary every day. Go to Holy Communion in reparation to her Immaculate Heart on the first Saturday of every month, and make sacrifices. She said to the little children that her Divine Son was "already too much offended."

There is the First Friday devotion which our Blessed Lord gave to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque to spread throughout the world. This is the devotion of the First Saturday, and instead of nine as with the First Fridays, Our Blessed Mother must have

> bargained for us, for she only asks **five** First Saturdays in her honor. Every time the Son is offended, the heart of the Mother is offended. We should strive to make up to her by receiving the Communion of reparation on the first Saturday of the month. Besides that, Our Blessed Mother asks for 15 minutes of meditation on the Mysteries of the Rosary. This is the message of our day for the salvation of the world, and it is that which Mr. John Matthias Haffert will give you at the Municipal auditorium February 12 when he gives his illustrated lecture on the "Wonders of Fatima."[25]

After this stirring and appealing sermon, Reverend Felix F. Miller gave Solemn Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, assisted by Reverend Daniel C. O'Meara, S.M., and Reverend Joachim Markus, O.F.M. Present in the sanctuary were Right Reverend Monsignor William J. Castel and Reverend James W. Courtney, S.J. After Benediction both days the individual blessing was given the participants by the attending priests. The Chapel of Our Mother of Sorrows was crowded with devotees of Our Lady. All gathered to pay homage to Our Lady of Fatima, and to intercede with her for the conversion of Russia and for peace for the world. Mothers with their little children approached the shrine with great faith.

The reception begun in this manner continued until Monday Noon, February 9. Throughout the three days the Rosary was recited continuously all through the night vigils kept by the Marianites of Holy Cross and their boarders of the Academy. Some of the Spanish boarders made **a novena of hours** in vigil before Our Lady's statue from Midnight onward the morning the statue was to leave the Academy.

The morning the statue left the chapel, the procession was formed by the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, their novices being privileged in carrying the statue and the reliquary. The emotion that swept over many of those in the chapel and in the procession was one that could only find expression in tears. Some explained that they regretted seeing the statue leave the chapel. Others could find no explanation for the experience. During its 43 hours in the Chapel of Our Mother of Sorrows, the enshrined statue was visited by approximately 1300 persons, and this when the gay Carnival Season of New Orleans was at its height. As a result of the triduum, it has been estimated that there are 1300 additional apostles of the message of Fatima.

That the Sisters might in turn inculcate in those under their care a great knowledge and love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the present administration has provided well for the catechetical training. With the permission of His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D., the Archdiocesan Confraternity of Catechetical Schools established in the summer of 1936 a branch at Holy Angels Academy under the immediate supervision of Reverend Robert Tracy and Reverend Anthony Wegmann. Reverend Father Wegmann has continued since October 4, 1940 to conduct the Confraternity class on Friday evenings during the scholastic term. The religious of the Provincial House, seculars, and a number of the seniors and Juniors of the Academy avail themselves of this privilege. Father Wegmann's associate in this instruction at Holy Angels has varied at times, Reverend Hugh Staud, O.F.M. Reverend Robert Gordon Raine, Reverend Edward Boudreaux, having served in this capacity.

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[25] Transcribed from a shorthand record of Father Courtney's sermon.

In alternate years the graduation exercises of all the Confraternity schools are held at Holy Angels Academy. The ninth annual awarding of Catechetical Teachers' certificates to graduates of the Archdiocesan Normal schools in Christian Doctrine took place on Saturday, May 25, 1946 at Holy Angels Academy. Certificates were awarded to lay catechists who completed two years of work at the Normal schools conducted at Dominican college and Holy Angels Academy, and to religious who had completed the work for religious teachers conducted at Loyola University of the South and Xavier University.

The Confraternity schools, now in their thirteenth year of operation, were organized by Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D. Archbishop of New Orleans, in the fall of 1935, and placed under the direction of the Very Reverend Monsignor Edward C. J. Prendergast, then Superintendent of Parochial Schools, and Reverend Joseph Buckley, S.M., professor of dogmatic theology, Notre Dame seminary. In 1937 the office of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine was separated from that of superintendent of schools and the Reverend Robert E. Tracy was appointed director of the Confraternity of Normal schools in Christian Doctrine.

The purpose of these schools is to provide cathechists with an advanced course in Catholic doctrine and in catechetical methods. After a complete two-year course of study with eight periodical examinations, the qualifying students receive a certificate bearing the signature of the Most Reverend Archbishop which entitles them to teach religion in the Archdiocese under the supervision of their respective pastors. In March, 1941, the course was developed for Religious sisters to include lectures on Church History and Liturgy with the object also of affording college credit. In twelve years the schools have issued over 629 certificates to lay and religious catechists.

A survey of the catechetical work done by the Sisters in their various localities reveals that every evening after school four Sisters of St. Cecilia's School, four Sisters of St. Basil's school, Plaquemine, three at St. Peter and Paul School; three at Incarnate Word School, teach religion to public school children. Every Saturday and Sunday eleven Sisters of St. Francis de Sales Academy of Houma, three in Plaquemine, two at St. John Academy, Franklin, four at St. Charles Academy, Lake Charles, three at Sacred Heart Academy, Morgan City, four in St. Edmund Convent, Eunice, two at Sacred Heart High School, Ville Platte, three at St. Rita School, two at Saint Alphonsus School, Ocean Springs, Mississippi, give catechetical instructions. Two Sisters of Holy Angels Academy assist the priest director in the instruction of the public High-School students from the Francis T. Nicholls' School at the Junior Newman Club which meets at 3:15 P.M. every Monday in the Academy auditorium. Two priestly vocations have come from this Junior Newman unit. After Graduation in 1945, Ralph Forestier entered the seminary, and in September, 1947, Bernard Suhor followed in his footsteps.

The Sisters lend themselves to the summer vacation school, at times six of them engaging in this work in Morgan City and four in Arnaudville.

In His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel's letter of September 1, 1943, commenting upon his recent canonical examination of the Province, he expressed appreciation of the preparation of the Sisters:

> Your educational program is evidently in conformity with approved standards, but I am particularly edified at your successful effort to prepare your Sisters to meet the qualifications demanded by State and Educational Associations. Apparently, these efforts are not taxing too severely the health and energy of your Sisters, especially when they are permitted to follow these additional studies in their earliest years in religion.[26]

All the schools are flourishing in number and religious tone. There is a continued cultural and educational development of the older members as well as the younger ones due to Mother Provincial's abiding interest in everything of benefit to the Sisters. Numbers of Sisters, year after year, are sent to the best colleges of the country, and in addition to this, fine opportunities are afforded the beginning teachers in Holy Angels College department. One of Mother Provincial's characteristic instructions to the Sisters regarding their training reveals her prudent care of their formation as teachers:

> As a teaching Community, we are responsible for laying the foundation of the education of thousands of children; this foundation is laid in the primary grades; therefore, each young Sis-

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[26] Canonical Visitation of the province, Letter from his Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D., September 1, 1943.

> ter must be thoroughly equipped to teach the grades clearly. No number of fads can take the place of the four R's—**Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic** and **Religion.**

In her talks with the Sisters, Mother Provincial stresses religion again and again, telling them to "Talk religion, teach religion, become religious-minded at all times." All strive to make Religion interesting by means of charts, posters, stories and other devices. Besides the observation of the Community Supervisor, the Sisters enjoy the help of their Superiors and Principals whose duty it is to see that they teach the fundamentals well, and that they not only present their lessons in a professional manner but guide their students to a knowledge of the content of each lesson especially in making their assignments. With the help of the professionally-trained members, who impart their training to the younger members, these Sisters soon become proficient teachers.

During Mother Mary Liguori's administration 1927-32 the Community had begun to send Sisters to colleges outside of the state —notably to the Incarnate Word College and Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio, Texas, to earn degrees. This practice was continued by Mother Xavier's administration 1932-1948. Annually, a large number of Sisters travel westward to San Antonio at the close of school in June, northward to St. Mary's College, Holy Cross, Indiana, to Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.; to St. Louis University, St. Louis, Missouri. Formerly they attended the Siena College in Memphis, Tennessee when the teacher-training courses were offered there under the auspices of the Catholic Committee of the South. For the past two summers Siena College has conducted a branch school at Loyola University of the South, New Orleans. Holy Angels' own College Department held its first graduation exercises in the year 1942. This privelege of conferring the Baccalaureate degree was granted by the Louisiana State Legislature in July, 1916 but could not be exercised until the late 1930's because of a lack of teacher-personnel with which to staff the College Department of the Academy.

Plans for the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress to be held in New Orleans October, 1938, were in progress. The Sisters and students participated in the various exercises of the Congress during its three days, October 17-20. On Youth's Day, the entire High School and upper Grammar grades participated in the singing of the Mass. The Sisters joined the other communities in the singing of the Proper of the Mass and the **Credo** at the High Mass celebrated on Women's Day. Holy Angels' band furnished its share of the music on the closing day of the Congress. Holy Angels also displayed an exhibit at the Municipal Auditorium in connection with the Congress.

The words selected for the Congress Hymn were composed by one of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, Sister Mary of St. Norbert (O'Bryan), and set to music by a Professor of Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The entire student body of the Academy and the Marianites walked in the procession, which was almost city-wide in length, in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. This brought to a close this outstanding event the City of New Orleans had long anticipated and for which it had been preparing for more than a year. What countless blessings must have been realized, both spiritual and temporal, from such a demonstration of love to our Eucharistic King.

During the days of the Congress at least fifty visiting Sisters from different parts of the United States, besides visiting Marianites from the country missions, enjoyed hospitality at Holy Angels Academy.

Shortly before this magnificent tribute to our Eucharistic King in New Orleans, news was received of the celebration of the centenary of the foundation of the Congregation of the Fathers of Holy Cross, the chief feature of which, in France, was the reconsecration of the Church of Holy Cross at Le Mans. Mother Mary of St. Liguori (Mazerat) gave a graphic report of all that occurred:

> Reverend Father O'Donohue with his General Councillors, consisting of six Fathers and Brothers of Holy Cross from Indiana, then the Father Provincial from Canada and Reverend Father Sauvage, C.S.C., General Procurator, from Rome, with the French Provincial and all the Holy Cross Fathers and Brothers here in France assembled at Le Mans for the big day, November 9.
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> On Thursday, November 4, Reverend Mother sent Sister Mary of St. Charles and me to the Clinic in Le Mans to greet and to entertain the two Sisters from Indiana Province, as Sister Mary of St. John Berchmans, the Superior of the Clinic, does not speak English. Mother Mary Eleonore, C.S.C. (who attended a convention in New Orleans and lectured in the College Department in 1930 or 1931) and the Mistress of Novices, Sister M. Franciana, C.S.C., from Indiana came with the Fathers and Brothers. Four young Canadian Sisters of Holy Cross on their way to India with the Father Provincial were delegated to represent their branch of Holy Cross. As you could not be here, dear Mother, I considered myself the representative of my dear Louisiana. Mother M. Eleonore, C.S.C., if you remember, is a great admirer of our Venerated Father Founder. Both she and her companion were overjoyed because of the privilege given them of attending the celebration.
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> The following morning we attended Mass in the little chapel of Holy Cross. Reverend Father O'Donohue, C.S.C. was the celebrant. He invited us to breakfast in their little parlor—fruit, bread, butter, and chocolate, which he partook with us. After this

we returned to the Clinic and the Sisters spent the remainder of the morning visiting the Cathedral and the main churches of Le Mans. That afternoon we returned to the Motherhouse with the two Sisters to whom Reverend Mother gave a hearty welcome. They were very happy to be with us, and, indeed, would rejoice to be reunited with the original foundation. That night after recreating with the Community they retired for a good night's rest.

The following morning we took them to Mass at Solesmes which they enjoyed immensely. Brother Lambert, C.S.C., the General Treasurer, and Brother Bernard, C.S.C., another member of the Indiana Generalate had come to Le Mans to assist at the nine o'clock Mass. The Father Sacristan showed us the beautiful vestments, chalices, and other sacred vessels. We were also taken down into the Crypt to the tomb of the saintly Dom Gueranger, the great liturgical writer, Benedictine Abbot, who re-established the Order in France in 1837.

We invited the Brothers to the Motherhouse to dine, as it was Noon. They were as happy to come to the Motherhouse as we were to receive them. That evening they drove back with Sister Mary of St. Charles to Le Mans as they were to visit (the Sisters also) Lisieux the following day.

On Monday evening Monsignor Grente, Bishop of Le Mans, gave a banquet at his residence for the Fathers and the Brothers of Holy Cross.

November 9 was the date of the consecration. On the eve, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien and her Councillors (excepting Sister Assistant who had gone to Epinal for Sister Mary of St. Narcissus' funeral) and all the Superiors of the Houses with the exception of Mother Mary of St. Eleonore, M.S.C., who was too far away at Spinal, arrived at the clinic so as to be on hand in the early morning.

The ceremony began at 8:15 and ended at 12:45. As a rule, no one but the clergy is allowed in the Church at the beginning of a ceremony of consecration. In honor of the great event, the restoration of the Church of Holy Cross to the Fathers, His Excellency permitted the Sisters of Holy Cross to assemble in the tribune. So there we were, Reverend Mother kneeling in the center, surrounded not only by her own Sisters, but the two branches from Indiana and Canada, these latter had arrived only the night before.

We had a splendid view of the ceremony from the beginning to the end; the tracing of ashes in the letters of the Greek and Latin alphabet by Bishop Grente with his crosier; the anointing and incensing of the twelve crosses on the pillars of the Church; the consecrating of the main altar, a beautiful ceremony in itself; previous to this, the solemn procession of the relics, etc. While His Excellency was consecrating the main altar, the Bishops of Laval and Angers, in both of whose dioceses the Fathers of Holy Cross have institutions, consecrated the two side altars, and the Benedictine Abbot consecrated the altar down in the crypt. The climax came with the Pontifical High Mass, Monsignor Grente officiating and Reverend Father Donohue, C.S.C., celebrating with his General Assistants as Deacon and Sub-deacon. How holy and happy Reverend Donohue appeared! It is to him that is due the restoration of the Church, and, above all, the reinstating of our Venerated Founder as the true Founder of Holy Cross.

Brother Lambert, C.S.C., the General Treasurer from Indiana, defrayed the expenses for the Sisters' Banquet, which I am sure equalled that given the clergy. **This was the first reunion of the Sisters of Holy Cross,** the Marianites of Holy Cross, of the original foundation, and Sisters of Indiana and Canada. The remark was made several times that it is to be hoped that we will all be reunited in one Congregation for our Centenary in 1941. The little Sisters from Canada, though very happy to be with us, made no remarks to this effect, for, being young, they know nothing of the separation of their houses from the Motherhouse in France.

At 3:00 p.m. we returned to the Church for the main event of the Centenary, a grand eulogy of the life, work, and virtues of our Venerated Founder, Basil Anthony Mary Moreau, delivered by the eloquent Vicar-General of Le Mans, Monsignor Foing. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was then given by the Bishop of Lavall. The singing through all the ceremonies was rendered by eight Monks from Solesmes; this speaks for itself—it was heavenly!

Finally, after extending greetings, the Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters of Holy Cross, stood on the Church steps to have their photograph taken. This ended a happy day.

But still another joy was in store for us. Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien entertained the Reverend Father Donohue, C.S.C., with nine of his Fathers and Brothers at dinner the following day. While our chaplain acted as host for them, Reverend Mother, in our refectory, entertained the Sisters from Indiana, Canada, and all of our Superiors, Sisters, Novices, and Postulants.

Let us hope that this is **the first step to a speedy reunion** not for a day but for aye.[27]

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[27] Letter from Mother Mary of St. Ligouri, M.deS.C., Precigne, November, 1937.

SPIRITUAL RANKS IN THE MARIANITES' FROM NEW ORLEANS

1.	Sister M. de Chantal	Brigitte Dorsey
2.	Sister Mary of St. Aurelia	Julia Field
3.	Sister Mary Emmanuel	Catherine Magguire
4.	Sister Mary of St. Winifred	Julia Gleason
5.	Sister Mary of St. Ambrose	Ellen Dailey
6.	Sister Mary of St. Lawrence	Rose Finnegan
7.	Sister Mary of St. Ignatius	Marguerite Hays
8.	Sister Mary of St. Agatha	Ellen Marony
9.	Sister Mary of St. Aloysius	Brigette Shaughnessey
10.	Sister Mary of St. Joseph	Johanna Shea
11.	Sister Mary of St. Candide	Mary Duffy
12.	Sister Mary of St. Fortunata	Johanna Mangan
13.	Sister Mary of St. Mechtilde	Josephine Schwarz
14.	Sister Mary of St. Marcienne	Rose McArdle
15.	Sister Mary of St. Cesaria	Mary McDonnell
16.	Sister Mary of St. Estelle	Elizabeth Franzel
17.	Sister Mary of St. Elizabeth	Honorine O'Connor
18.	Sister Mary of St. Georgia	Alice Marie Larose
19.	Sister Mary of St. Gilbert	Catherine Fallon
20.	Sister Mary of St. Lydia	Helen Heaphy
21.	Sister Mary of St. Martina	Corinne Chaery
22.	Sister Mary of St. Bruno	Pauline M. High
23.	Sister Mary of St. Ferdinand	Mary Ellen McCracken
24.	Sister Mary of St. Juliana	Marie Carey
25.	Sister Mary of St. Alfred	Bertha Plassan
26.	Sister Mary of St. Bathilde	Louise Eugenie Plassan
27.	Sister Mary of St. Fidelis	M. H. O'Donnell
28.	Sister Mary of St. Frederick	Marie Helene Flynn
29.	Sister Mary of St. Edith	Elizabeth Delaney
30.	Sister Mary of St. Antonine	Mary Ellen Brown
31.	Sister Mary of St. Benedict	Catherine Connelly
32.	Sister Mary of St. Francis Xavier	Margaret Mary Haggerty
33.	Sister Mary of St. Macrina	Ellen Hanley
34.	Sister Mary of St. Claudia	T. Marie Pegram
35.	Sister Mary of St. Clement	Mathilda Groebel
36.	Sister Mary of St. Cajetan	Leonide Doriocourt
37.	Sister Mary of St. Stanislaus	Margaret Brennan
38.	Sister Mary of St. Eugene	Juanita Negrotto

CHAPTER SIX

THE CROSS LIMNED IN WAR SHADOWS

ALMOST TEN years elapsed before another reunion of the Family of Holy Cross could again take place in Le Mans. During this time Europe was plunged into the World War II. On October 16, 1939, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien gave Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial of the Louisiana Province, the power to act in whatever circumstances concerned the administration of the Province, in the event that communication with France should be terminated by the war.

Mother Mary of St. Julien then gave an insight into conditions in France:

> Our children are about two miles from here; but, Mother, may God ever spare you from this terrible disaster; and we are told to be ready for three years at least! Bologne is crushed to the last. The other week three Bishops and two hundred priests were executed. May the Blessed Mother keep the enemy away from us.
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> We all thank you very, very much, dear Mother, for your prayers; in return, be assured of ours and also of our sincere affection and confidence that you will do everything you can to keep the Province in a good religious spirit, so that all may stand firm in their work for God. Take good care of yourself; you know that I want you with me to the end.[1]

In May, 1940 Reverend Mother Julien called attention to the progress of the European conflict:

> How many reasons we have this year for turning to our Queen and praying to her from the bottom of our hearts! The world is upset, Europe is on fire, and nothing, as yet, permits us to foresee an end to this terrible war. How is it that God has not yet given peace? We have neither prayed nor expiated enough. As a child, let us throw ourselves with more confidence at the feet of our heavenly Mother. Let us ask Mary to have pity on us. She is all powerful over the Heart of God, and she loves us.

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[1] Letter written at Precigne, France, by Mother Mary of St. Julien October 16, 1939.

> Let us take our share in atoning for the sins of the world, not by extraordinary penances, but by greater generosity in the acceptance of our everyday trials by true fraternal charity, self-forgetfulness and indulgence for others. If we do this, my dear Daughters, we shall obtain more than we hope, and our soldiers will soon return to take their places in the home.[2]

In compliance with the wishes of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt that September 8, 1940, be a day of prayer for peace, our Most Reverend Archbishop Rummel ordered this Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin to be celebrated with more than usual devotion. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed all day in the community chapel, from the end of Mass until six o'clock in the evening. The Sisters spent the greater part of the day keeping vigil and adoring Christ in the Eucharist.

Pope Pius XII. proclaimed November 24 of the same year as a day to be set aside for special prayer and devotion to implore divine intervention in the terrible war that was devastating Europe, and to beg God's blessing and protection upon America as well as to secure peace for the world. There was exposition of the Most Blessed Sacrament throughout the day. Adoring their Eucharistic King, the Marianites spent hours begging Him to grant peace to a suffering world and to bring many more hearts to His loving service. Besides the adoration of the day, Mother Provincial recommended the performance of extra penances. The day was spent in silence. Recreation was indulged in only at supper. The community's prayers were united with those of pious souls throughout the entire world on that special day of prayer to secure from the great Heart of Christ the long-desired peace to the world.

The Litanies of Our Lady and of Saint Joseph, together with the five-decade Rosary in honor of the Queen of the Most Holy Rosary and a prayer to Saint Anne were recited daily throughout World War II to procure God's protection for Marianite sisters in the French War Zone, at Le Mans, Lisieux, Parame, and outlying sections.

The Sisters remembered their Superior General, Mother Mary of St. Julien, all the more lovingly and fervently on her first Feast Day during the war period. Under the restrictions of war they were unable to do anything to relieve the distress of their Sisters in France. Doubling their spiritual offerings for the Superior General was their only way of assuring her of their great anxiety for her safety and that of those under her care. The Sisters in the Louisiana Province spent the Feast Day in union of heart with Reverend

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[2] Letter from Mother Mary of St. Julien, May, 1940.

Mother, and made a spiritual bouquet which Mother Provincial sent her, attesting to the affection of her daughters in Louisiana.

In a letter of June 3, 1941 Mother Provincial received the news from Sister Mary of St. Odile, Superior of the French Hospital, New York, which Mrs. Justin Ward had brought from France. Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien sent two Sisters to visit Mrs. Ward before she boarded the clipper for America, that she might convey a message for her to those in America:

> Eighteen of our young Sisters, all English subjects, have been interned in a camp at Besancon, near Switzerland, with about 450 other religious belonging to different Congregations. They sleep on straw; the food is not edible. Two of the Sisters were returned to the Mother House because of illness.
>
> Reverend Mother and all the Sisters at the Mother House are well. None of our houses is occupied by the Germans, and they have not interfered with the Sisters' religious life.

All hearts were torn with anguish at the thought of the sufferings of the Sisters in concentration camp. The Sisters expressed their anxiety to Reverend Mother in a message at the close of the Provincial Chapter:

> With France in its present state of chaos, and the echoes of Reverend Mother's last message, 'I am overwhelmed with grief" still ringing in our ears, our hearts go out to our Reverend Mother and Sisters trapped in France's dreadful war area.
>
> May our August Queen, who has so often deigned to bless France with her presence on so many occasions, plead with her Divine Son to protect our dear Sisters. May she again prove her power in staying the wrath of God. These are the hopes and cries that leap to our lips as we storm heaven with ever-increasing fervor, for to know the peril and want of our own Sisters, to feel it keenly, and yet not be able to help them—who is there that can describe our anxiety? Thus, also, in our prayers to the Prince of Peace are mingled our sympathy, our hopes, and our fears for our dear Sisters in France during this terrible crisis.[3]

The Centenary of the Community's foundation in LeMans, France, (1941) was celebrated August 3-10 by the Louisiana Province simply and privately but in a manner worthy of the occasion. At the close of the annual retreat the Centennial celebration was given prominence in the ceremony of that day, which also marked the Jubilees of several Sisters. Most Reverend Archbishop Rummel presided, and His Excellency delivered a most inspiring address on the religious life. During dinner a little program was given comprising—Jubilee songs, recitation of Jubilee and Centenary poems. The **Ave Maria** was sung at the opening of the program, and the hymn, "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name", closed this day which claims a cherished spot in the Sisters' memories.

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[3] Minutes of the Provincial Council, 1941, at the close of the Provincial Chapter.

Mother Provincial and her Assistant, Sister Mary of St. Cajetan Doriocourt, returned October 18, 1941 from their visit to the Sisters in New York, Saint Laurent (Montreal, Canada) and Notre Dame. In Canada and in Indiana they attended celebrations commemorating the One-hundredth Anniversary of the Congregation's foundation. They were able on their return to give the news brought by Reverend Gagnon, C.S.C. from France that Reverend Mother had celebrated her golden jubilee of her profession that summer; that the Sisters' supply of food was ample, and that they were able to share some of it with the Holy Cross Fathers. The scarcity of fuel, though, caused real suffering in the depth of winter.

While the Sisters from the Provincial House in New Orleans were present with their students at a Sodality convention, the dreadful news came over the radio that the United States had been acually forced ino active participation in the terrible war by the Japanese declaration of war on the United States and Japan's disastrous attack on Pearl Harbor. January 11, 1942, in accordance with the request of Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D. the devotion of the Holy Hour was begun for world peace and for the protection of the boys in the service and on active duty.

Orders came from the authorities that all openings, such as glass windows, had to be boarded up to provide the shelter for blackouts during air raids. The Provincial House and the other buildings forming the unit—the academy, the chapel, the auditorium—were prepared for the emergency. Reverend Charles Speaker, Air-Raid inspector for this section of New Orleans visited the academy and observed a complete air raid drill, including the drill in which two places of refuge had to be sought. Father complimented the children on the silence observed. He also expressed satisfaction at the splendid protection afforded. The parents remarked how carefully Mother Provincial had provided for the safety of her Sisters and the children under their supervision. The chapel formed the first refuge from the academy, and the Sisters' home, the second refuge. Here it is possible, on the first floor, to open all rooms into one so that ample space was provided.

A letter from the Superior General dated March 5, 1942, was received in New Orleans in August of that year. In it the progress of the war was sketched:

I do not know whether this letter will reach you or not. It is so bad to have been entirely cut off from all our houses in America for two long years.

You must know, from the newspapers, the conditions in France, and how food and fuel are reduced. Meat is allowed only once or twice a week, and in a very small quantity; bread is bad and not nourishing, so that our poor Sisters, who work very hard, feel very much fatigued. Besides this, winter was extra cold this year, making Grippe and Bronchitis quite frequent. Otherwise, we have not suffered any damage from the war; but it is not over yet, and the English bombard places where Germans dwell. So we do not know what might still happen. We abandon ourselves to Divine Providence and trust in the powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin, Queen of France; but how sad it is to see our dear country crushed and ruled by the enemy. Let us hope that this great cross will bring France nearer to God.

In spite of the war we celebrated the Centenary of our Congregation. His Excellency, Bishop Grente, had the kindness of celebrating a Pontifical Mass in our chapel; in the afternoon he presided over a ceremony of reception and perpetual Profession. We shall send you an account of everything after the war.

On the twenty-fifth of March our good Bishop will give the Holy Habit to seven postulants, and one Sister will pronounce her perpetual Vows; so you see that, in spite of the war, we still have a few subjects, but we need twice that number.

Last year we lost our dear Sister Mary of St. Chantal who had a very edifying death.

Out of the seventeen English and Irish Sisters interned as prisoners of war, the eight Irish ones returned lately; the others will probably stay till the end of the war. They are in the East of France, at Vittel. They suffer a great deal on account of their separation from us, but are not badly treated.

I hope, dear Mother, you received from Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C. copy of the indult giving you the authorization to admit to temporary and perpetual Vows and to govern the Province without submitting things to us, as long as the hostilities last. Let us continue to pray that this terrible war will soon come to an end and that there will be a lasting peace.

His Excellency, Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, Apostolic Delegate to the United States, wrote Mother Mary Xavier from Washington, D.C., April 10, 1942, enclosing the indult from the Sacred Congregation of religious, which has been requested by Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien. This indult authorized certain modifications in the government of the Province of Louisiana for the duration of the war, and more the decree of execution, whereby the Sacred Congregation empowered the Apostolic Delegate to render the indult operative. This indult validated, as it were, the power "to act and to admit the Sisters to make their Vows, whether temporary or perpetual, during the war," which Reverend Mother General and her Council had given to Mother Provincial in a previously quoted letter of October 16, 1939.

September 17, 1943, Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross, sent Mother Provincial an extract from a letter received from Reverend Father Sauvage, C.S.C. dated at Rome, concerning which Very Reverend Father Cousineau remarked:

> For all practical purposes, then, you continue Provincial Superior till the next Chapter, and you may:
>
> (1) Ask your Archbishop to approve the prorogation of the powers of your Provincial Advisers;
>
> (2) If you want to prolong the office terms of certain of your Superiors, you may ask permission from your Archbishop. If not, you only have to name new Superiors, without having recourse to any approbation, as long as the forced separation from the General House lasts.

His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D., upon returning this letter to Mother Provincial, mentioned:

> This clears up all your present and future problems in relation to your jurisdiction and term of office as Provincial during the war period. In every sense, the solution commends itself for its reasonableness and practical approach.
>
> When situations arise that will require the approval of your Ordinary, you know that I will gladly give you every possible cooperation, assuring you in the meantime of my prayerful wishes for your personal health and welfare, so that you may carry through your serious responsibilities with your customary efficiency and success.

July 17,-29, 1943 marked the beginning of the Canonical Visitation of the Provincial House and Holy Angels Academy. This was the first time since His Excellency's appointment to the See of New Orleans that the visitation was made of the Provincial House. His Excellency chose this particular time of the year as it was about the only opportunity he would have to interview all the Sisters of the Congregation. All the Sisters scheduled to follow the first retreat came to the Provincial House a few days in advance to be present for the opening of this Visit. The Provincial Chapter was postponed for the same reason, and was held on July 28, 29, 30, 31 and August 1. In this way the Superiors did not have to make two trips to New Orleans; travelling accommodations being so poor, and trains so congested because of war conditions, this was appreciated.

The Community having assembled in the chapel for the opening of the Visitation, His Excellency recited the prayer to the Holy Spirit and addressed the Sisters, explaining the nature and the reason for the Visitation—the reason being nothing more than the fulfillment of the prescriptions of Canon Law. His Excellency urged the Sisters not to prolong their interviews except for some serious, weighty reason.

A list containing the names of the Sisters, their date of profession, and employment of each Sister was drawn up for His Excellency's use as he interviewed each Sister. The Sisters presented themselves in the order of their rank. Each one felt encouraged and privileged to have enjoyed His Excellency's fatherly counsels.

In the course of his visit, His Excellency gave a conference to the members of the Provincial Council and the Superiors, visited the chapel, the Sisters' House, and inspected the books. His report of the canonical visitation was a source of great gratification to the Administration and to the Sisters of the Province:

> It is gratifying to assure you that the general spirit of your Community is almost universally very excellent. There is a general appreciation of the religious vocation and life, a fine sense of fidelity to the rule and a spirit of loyalty to authority as represented in the major and local Superiors.
>
> The condition, appointments, and equipment of your chapel are really admirable, and quite in conformity with the regulations and the mind of the Church. Your finances give every evidence of careful and prudent management, and I admire very much the system of check-up by the Provincialate on the material affairs of the mission houses. This same comment I wish to make in connection with the system of reporting followed by your Community in regard to the spirituality and discipline of the Sisters. Possibly this is one of the fundamental reasons for the good spirit that prevails generally throughout the Community.
>
> May I again assure you that the Visitation afforded me and the priests who accompanied me much edification and even great consolation.[4]

Though the great ocean and lack of communication with the Mother House, due to the war, separated the Louisiana Province from Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien on the occasion of her Golden Jubilee, all her spiritual daughters united their prayers and begged God's protection on their dear Reverend Mother, whose mental anxiety and physical suffering are so great. Nor was she forgotten in the felicitations extended to all the Jubilarians, for a special part of the Jubilee program was dedicated to our Reverend Mother. A toast was offered to her—in fact, our hands clasped hers across the Atlantic ocean, and our hearts were united with hers in love and prayer in the great heart of Christ.

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[4] Report of the Canonical Visitation of the Provincial House July 27-29, 1943 made by His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D., Archbishop of New Orleans.

At the close of the 1943 Chapter, the Capitulants, at the thoughtful suggestion of Mother Provincial, decided to have offered for our Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien's Golden Jubilee fifty Holy Masses. All hearts went out to Reverend Mother as the Sisters prayed that God would brighten her Jubilee day by the thought that all her Sisters were united with her in thanksgiving to God for the graces and favors He had bestowed upon her during her long years in His service. All prayed that God would give her strength to bear the hard trials she was enduring, and would speedily bring them to an end.

In the lives of the Marianites, the colors of war heightened as three of their Sisters from the French Hospital, New York, Sisters Mary of St. Enda, Mary of St. Bridget, and Mary of St. Celine, stopped a day or two at the Provincial House en route from New York September 21, 1943, to San Antonio, Texas, for their new chapter of work, active service in charge of the Station Hospital, Normoyle Ordinance Depot, San Antonio, Texas. Their pictures appeared in the **Register** and in **Catholic Action of the South.** The pictures from the **Register** carried the notation, "The first Sisters to take charge of a military hospital in this war."

The day the Sisters spent at Holy Angels was spent sightseeing. At 4:30 p. m. the Superiors and the Sisters of the Provincial House gave them a party at which they were welcomed in song. Sister Mary of St. Bridget afterwards wrote a very beautiful letter in appreciation of all that was done to make their stay in New Orleans memorable; in it she told very vividly of their arrival and reception at San Antonio:

> Father Fitzgerald, C.S.C., was waiting on the platform. He was accompanied by Mrs. Haines, who is the wife of one of the medical officers in the camp. The trip from the railroad to the camp lasted about fifteen minutes. Our first stop was at the little chapel where we knelt to adore Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. The Catholic chapel occupies a separate wing off the Post chapel, and the Blessed Sacrament is reserved there night and

day. On Sundays, Mass is said in the Post chapel as it is the largest.

From the chapel we went directly to the hospital where we had an interview with Colonel Myres. He received us graciously and told us that he wanted us to feel right at home. After a short conversation we were taken to the Mess Hall where we were served a delicious supper. Then one of the nurses conducted us to our quarters. We were surprised to find our little rooms arranged like any convent cell. Everything conforms with religious poverty, but for all that we have every convenience. We certainly did not expect to find crucifixes on the walls and holy water fonts in each room. Father Fitzgerald, of course, is responsible for all of this. Nevertheless, he could not have done it without the permission and assistance of Colonel Myres, and Colonel Thompson, both of whom are Catholics.

We have had the privilege of assisting at Holy Mass every morning since our arrival. Father Fitzgerald has permission from the Archpishop for a private chapel here in our own apartment. There is a room set aside for this purpose, and Father told us this morning that he will bring us the Blessed Sacrament tomorrow. We have, indeed, much to be grateful for. The work, too, is most gratifying. The Catholic boys, especially, are very happy to have the Sisters here. Indeed, I must say that everyone with whom we have come in contact has been kind and considerate.

The Sisters were much appreciated at Normoyle Ordinance Hospital; however, after several months this hospital was closed. As the troops were transferred to another locality, Reverend Father Fitzgerald, C.S.C., who had been instrumental in procuring the Sisters for the hospital, advised them to return to the French Hospital, New York.

Not only were the Sisters, themselves, giving their country active service, but their old students were distinguishing themselves. The **Catholic News** of July 22, 1944, carried the headline on page two, **General Collins Leader Since Days as Pupil of Sisters** to a news item concerning one of the graduates of the Marianites' school in Algiers, suburb of New Orleans. Mother Mary Xavier was principal of the Holy Name of Mary School, Algiers, when Joseph Collins was a pupil there from the first through the eighth grades.

"We are very proud of Joseph," Mother Xavier said in telling of the last visit she had with her former pupil, Major General Joseph Lawton Collins, who recently led his Seventh Corps troops across the Cherbourg peninsula and captured its vital metropolis.

General Collins has been named Commander of the American forces in the Seventh Army Corps in France.

"But," added Mother Xavier, "I am not at all surprised at his recent accomplishments. He showed wonderful leadership as a student. When he came to see me on his way to maneuvers two years ago, he said, 'I have very little time in New Orleans, but I could not leave without seeing you.' I appreciated his visit so much."

Another teacher, Sister Mary of St. Thomas (Hincley), recalled the days when "Lightning Joe," as he is now known throughout the world, was in her charge. She said: "He was perfectly wonderful in every way; in character and in intellect. He was a leader in all activities. When he was only ten years of age, he had built for the school a basketball court, on his own initiative."

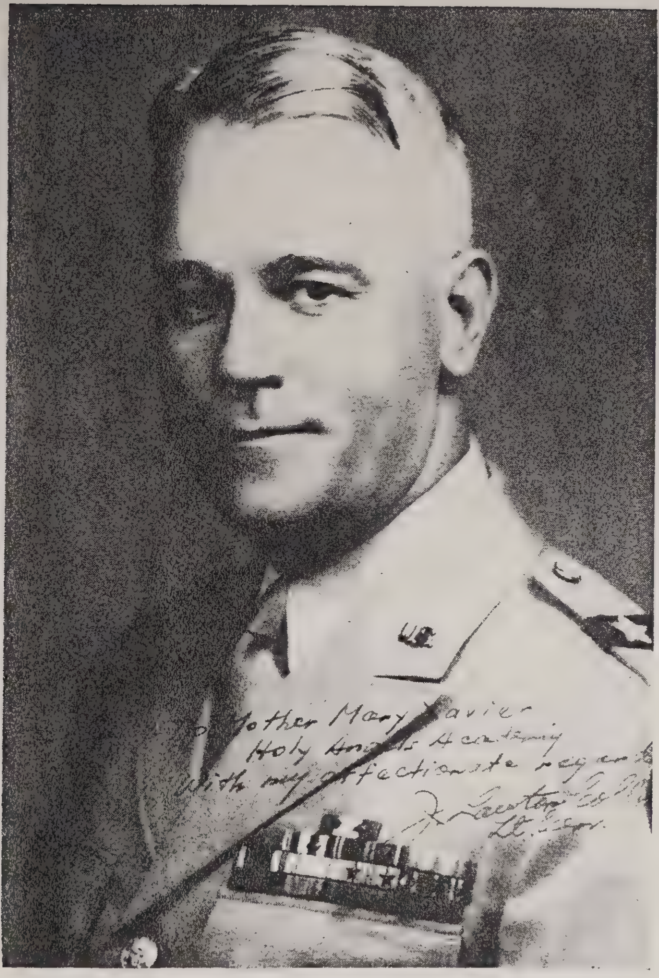
General Collins was attending Louisiana State University when he received his appointment to West Point, from which he was graduated with the famous "Class of Generals" in 1917.

Since Pearl Harbor, General Collins has been the recipient of four citations, two of them for action under enemy fire. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal in 1942 for his work in organizing the defense of Hawaii as chief of staff of the Hawaiian Department. He was given the bronze Oak Leaf Cluster for his services in Guadalcanal, where "by his energetic and inspiring leadership and aggressive tactical employment of his division, he initiated a sustained offensive against the main Japanese force which materially contributed to the final defeat of the enemy."

The Silver Star was awarded General Collins for personal bravery in the Guadalcanal battle, a feat which took him through 800 yards of enemy sniper fire and in which he personally helped to destroy several Japanese pill-boxes. The fourth citation, the Legion of Merit, was awarded in September, 1943, for "exceptional meritorious service" while serving as commander of an infantry division on New Georgia. The citation stated he was in the front line with his troops when the Munda airport was captured.

When the bomb-shattered city of Cherbourg fell completely last month, it was this New Orleans officer who led the conquering Americans into the city. The radiotelephoto depicting the Nazis, General von Schlieben and Admiral Hennecke, surrendering to the youthful American General Collins, which was flashed throughout the world on that day, is a picture which will not soon be forgotten.

It is significant that a Catholic general, a native of New Orleans, city steeped in French tradition, should lead the Allied


To Mother Mary Xavier
Holy Angels Academy
With my affectionate regards
J. Lawton Collins
Lt. Gen.

GENERAL JOSEPH LAWTON COLLINS

"Lightning Joe"

> **troops in liberating the first important city following the invasion into Catholic France.**
>
> It has just been revealed how the cognomen, "Lightning Joe," was acquired by General Collins. Arriving at South Pacific Headquarters when he was in command of the Twenty-fifth Division, he told Admiral Halsey his division would be ready for action in two weeks. Said Halsey: "You"ve got thirty-six hours." In thirty-six hours, the Twenty-fifth briefed, repacked and was ready.[5]

Not only was it significant that a New Orleans Catholic general should lead the troops liberating France, but also that this leader should be a former student of the Marianite Sisters meant much to those in Louisiana when they learned that General Collins had liberated part of that country in which their Mother House was located.

Information from Le Mans was received through one of the Doctors of the French Hospital returning from France. The Superior, Sister Mary of St. Odile, reported that the Sisters in Le Mans looked well and happy. The Clinic and Father Founder's church of Holy Cross were not damaged by the bombing; some of the windows in the church were broken, but it did not amount to anything. There were no lives lost. This was heartening. The Marianites in France had no complaints to make about the Germans. They were very decent to them. As far as this doctor knew, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien and all the Sisters at Precigne (the Mother House) were well also. Those located at Le Mans had been without news from four of the mission houses in France since the invasion started. The houses that had been cut off in this way were those of Lisieux, Angers, Paramé, near St. Malo, and the one in Epinal.

At the same time as the above news was received from France, word of the liberation of the Sisters interned in the camp at Vittel reached New Orleans. These Sisters wrote from Liverpool, England, where they were stationed with a Community of Sisters. They expressed themselves as being very happy to be free and very anxious to get back to the Mother House as soon as they could. Reverend Father Gagnon, C.S.C. was returned with them to England. By telephone, the news was received from the Generalate of the Holy Cross Fathers that Father Gagnon had just arrived in New York by plane, overjoyed to be in the States.

Sister Mary of St. Claire's letter from St. Joseph's Clinic, Le Mans, dated September 4, describes the liberation of France.

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[5] Catholic News, July 22, 1944.

Here we are happy with our dear American liberators. Life is, little by little, returning to a normal state as the Germans leave the country. All the Department of Sarthe is free. Our birthplace, yours and mine[1] is entirely free. We have certainly suffered much, and God knows what we will still have to suffer; but if all of France is freed, she will once again arise out of this chaos.

The Allies were received here with flags and flowers to the cry of "Long Live America!" by everybody. The City of Mans was sufficiently saved despite the fact that it suffered 28 bombardments since March 7, 1944. There were only 206 civilians killed; this is very little when compared to the destruction of several cities, which were entirely demolished, as was the city of Little Saint Therese (Lisieux) where there were 10,000 deaths. There, nothing but the Basilica and the Monastery of the Carmelites remains.

Here, two days before the arrival of the Allied troops, the large house of our Father Founder fell; the Clinic suffered much; the house of the Sisters was badly damaged; that of the Fathers of Holy Cross also, as well as the Church of Our Lady of Holy Cross. At the Mother House all of our Sisters are well. The chapel and several rooms were badlly damaged; there were no victims. That is the essential thing.

The Clinic of St. Michael at Angers has been freed since August 10. We are without news from our Sisters. The city suffered three bombardments in June. Sister Mary of St. Agnes is Superior of this house.

The Clinic of St. Therese of Lisieux is still probably in the hands of the Germans. We are without news of our Sisters for a month. Sister Mary of St. Clothilde is Superior of this house.

The Clinic of St. Mary of Parame is freed; Mother Mary of St. Eleanore, M.S.C. is Superior. The city has suffered much; we are without news of our Sisters for a month.

The Orphanage of Fye is freed. Our Sisters were wounded; the Chapel and the buildings were badly damaged; there were no deaths.

At the Foundling House at Loue and the one at Mansigne all the Sisters are well. The Clinic at Epinal is not freed. We are without news from our Sisters for a long time.

How happy I am to send you these few details scratched in haste. Your family and mine are both well. The family of Sister Mary of St. Louis is doing well; at least, all were well before the Allies landed, but I know at that place a dreadful battle oc-

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[6] This letter was written to Sister Mary of St. Odile, M.deS.C., French Hospital, New York City.

> curred. Let us pray much that everything will be over before the winter; otherwise, the suffering will be too great. **How glad I am that we are able to write and say freely what we think.**

All hearts were gladdened by this first full account of the welfare of the Sisters in the various Community houses in France. News came directly from the Mother house at Precigne, January 8, 1945, in Circular Letter 322 conveying New Year's Greetings from Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien, the first direct news after **five years of forced silence** because of war restrictions. The letter recounted some of the many hardships and dangers to which the Sisters had been subjected; also, the wonderful protection of Our Lady of Boulogne.

> It is a great joy for me to be able to write to you after the long years physical and moral sufferings endured during the German occupation. The war, alas! is not yet completely over and many are still suffering. Let us hope, however, that the day is not far away when we shall enjoy a durable peace.
>
> I wish to express my gratitude to all our dear Sisters who devoted themselves in protecting our children and our infirm during the terrible bombardments. From my room where I now live almost as a recluse, I often admired them, praying Our Lady of the Seven Dolors to keep all safe and sound. Our sweet Mother was propitious to our petitions, and it is now a joyful hymn of gratitude which must burst from our hearts to her who so visibly protected us. None of our houses is damaged beyond repair and **only two of our Sisters were wounded.** All courageously withstood the many privations of the situation and their unwaning confidence in God and Mary strengthened them during the trial.
>
> Let me expose a few details which will enable you to appreciate to advantage the visible protection of our beloved Mother. In the first hours of the morning on the eighth of May, the ammunition depot a few kilometers from the Mother House was violently bombarded. The house oscillated several times, walls fell in, and the young children were almost thrown from their beds. Brokenhearted, the Sister in charge of the Preventorium ordered all to the cellar. Barefooted and shivering with cold and fear, the children ran down in the dark, stepping on broken glass; but, contrary to all expectations, none of them had even the slightest injury. Thousands of Ave Marias arose to Our Lady during those hours of anguish and our ever clement Mother heard them.
>
> Besides the falling down of the side vaults of the chapel

> and of several partitions in the house, hundreds of window panes were broken in that dreadful night. Many of our houses in France could relate similar or even worse experiences.
>
> We must also thank the Blessed Virgin for having brought back, at last, the Sisters who were kept so many years away by the German authorities. During these days of Our Lady's special visit—I mean the passage of Our Lady of Boulougne, this venerated statue which is taken in procession all over France—the sweet Mother will, once more, hear our prayers for our Congregation.

At the close of the war Our Lady of Boulougne's statue was carried by the French people in continuous procession through the country, from town to town, as an act of reparation, of homage and of thanksgiving to her for her miraculous intercession in behalf of the French people. This is what Reverend Mother alluded to in her message of March 1, 1945, Circular 223:

> I trust that Mary will obtain for us the return to God of our dear country, she whose venerated statue is enthusiastically welcomed from one end of France to the other while thousands of conversions take place wherever she passes. We had the great privilege of receiving Our Lady of Boulougne into our chapel which was flooded with light. Rows of electric light decorated the arches round the sanctuary and traced the lines round the canopy under which Her Miraculous statue was to be placed. The whole Community spent the night from December 22nd to 23rd at its feet; at midnight a solemn Mass was celebrated; many inhabitants of Precigne were present and received Holy Communion. Not one of you, my dear Daughters, was forgotten during that holy vigil. We remembered all your intentions before our dear Mother and prayed fervently for the Congregation, its works and its need of subjects.

The cruel hours of war passed together strengthened the bonds which united us in one family. How vividly those of the Louisiana and the French communities realized that they were all members of the same family! How great was the anguish of the Sisters in the States as well as those of the Mother House waiting for news from endangered houses! "How good and sweet it is for Sisters to dwell together" and to share their joys and sorrows!

At the New Orleans Provincial House the Ceremony of Investiture May 8, 1945 coincided with Victory in Europe, **V-E Day.** At the close of the ceremony, His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D. recited with the Congregation the Victory Day prayer. The **Te Deum** was intoned, serving a double purpose; namely, terminating the ceremony and forming a prayer of thanksgiving to God for victory in Europe.

August 14, 1945 at 6 p. m. on the eve of the Feast of the Assumption the great news that the war-weary world awaited so eagerly was flashed over the radio: **"Japan has surrendered. The was is over."** This was the message of President Harry Truman given to the anxious people of the United States. Immediately the whistles blew, church bells rang out the glad tidings, scenes of rejoicing were noted everywhere. The churches were filled to overflowing with the thousands who hastened to their respective parish church or houses of worship to return thanks to God for His goodness and mercy.

Three outstanding events in this Global War II were associated with Our Blessed Mother: The attack on Pearl Harbor made on December 7, the eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception; V-E Day occurred May 8, in the month dedicated to Our Lady; the surrender of Japan was officially announced on August 14, the even of the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin.

August 19, 1945 was a day of prayer and thanksgiving ordered by Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D. in compliance with the proclamation issued by President Truman, dedicating that day as one of thanksgiving to God for bringing the war to an end and of begging God's help in securing a just and a lasting peace. October 5 of this year was to see the return to the States of the victorious General Joseph Lawton Collins, whose reception at Holy Angels Academy, during the week that New Orleans feted him, is depicted in the following chapter.

Those comprising the Provincial Chapter of 1945 expressed to Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien sincere felicitations on having surmounted the insuperable difficulties, sufferings, and privations brought on by the war. They also renewed deep sympathy they had felt for her and the Sisters, taking cognizance of the fact that God had protected them in a very special manner, because not one was lost or seriously wounded.

> Your ill health, dear Reverend Mother, was a source of much sorrow and anxiety to the entire Province. Now we rejoice that it has pleased our Lord to restore in some measure your physical strength and energy. We are happy to know that you are able to attend the services in the chapel and to be active throughout a great part of the day. While we offer fervent prayers of gratitude for all that God has done for you and those under your care, we also supplicate Him for a continuance of the great blessing of good health to you, for your presence, dear Reverend Mother, means so much to the Community.

The Capitulants desire to express how much they appreciate all the messages and letters it has been their privilege to receive from you since communication has been established between France and America.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WITH HEARTS TRULY GRATEFUL

ANTICIPATING the big day, August 28, 1945, Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty)'s Golden Jubilee of her religious profession, and also wishing to give the mission Sisters the opportunity of sharing in the celebration, the Sisters who remained over from the second retreat joined with the Provincial House Community in the study hall at seven o'clock in the evening August 12 for the Jubilee celebration.

After the greeting song, sung by the Sisters, there followed addresses from the various Superiors—our Sister Assistant, Sister Mary of St. Cajetan (Doriocourt) spoke in behalf of the Community; a poem composed by Reverend James O'Brien, S.J. for the occasion was recited; an address, given by a member of the band of Postulants that Mother brought from Ireland in 1907 expressed the love and gratitude of this group. Piano and violin selections were interspersed among the addresses.

The climax of the evening's joy was reached when the Sisters presented Mother Provincial with their handsome gift, chalice, ciborium, and vestments, valued at $7,000, for the Chapel as an everlasting token of their esteem and affection. The inscriptions for the Sacred Vessels were:

For the Ciborium: For "the bread He has prepared for us."
(Wisdom 9:5)

To our dear Mother Mary Xavier, (Margaret Mary Haggerty), who has been all in all to us, her devoted daughters, these fifty years in the service of our All.

For the Chalice: For "the wine He has mingled for us."
(Wisdom 9:5)

To her, our dear Mother Mary Xavier, (Margaret Mary Haggerty), who has trod the wine press with Him these Fifty Years, many of them intimately and devotedly in our regard.

Knowing how great Mother's joy always is in seeing the representatives of the Great Little One, the Infant Jesus, liturgically

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[1] Provincial Council Minute Book, Minutes of the 1945 Provincial Chapter.

enrobed, her devoted daughters, in tribute of her Fiftieth Anniversary, presented to her new vestments for the chapel: As the presentation occurred at Christmas, the message accompanying the gift centered about the Infant Jesus:

> Your devoted daughters, dear Mother, in tribute on your Fiftieth Anniversary, gather the double silken threads of the years and with them weave, symbolically, these robes that will encompass the representative of the Infinite One. It is a little robe of love we would have you get for Him, Who has never in aught but divinity been arrayed. As graciously as its folds fall about Him, so lovingly and graciously do the tributes of our hearts form a mantle to encompass you, dear Mother, who hold for us so high an office in our regard.

A monetary gift of $10,000 from the Province Superiors was presented in the names of the Sisters to Mother Provincial during the year as a Jubilee offering. Wishing to share her gift with His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, that the Holy Father might use it for His charity fund, Mother sent one-tenth of her gift, $1,000, to Rome. The following letter from the Papal Secretary at Rome acknowledging this gift, N.104680, Vatican City, November 16, 1945, was received:

> It is my honored duty to acknowledge the receipt of your generous offering in the amount of $1,000 which you so thoughtfully forwarded to the Holy Father through the kindness of the Apostolic Delegate in thanksgiving for the blessing sent on the happy occasion of your Golden Jubilee.
>
> His Holiness now bids me assure you and the members of your esteemed community of His paternal gratitude and His deep appreciation of the sentiments of devotion and gratitude which inspired you in making Him this offering.
>
> The Holy Father bids me ask the Marianite Sisters of New Orleans to remember His intentions in a special way in their prayers, and as a token of His paternal solicitude He most cordially imparts to you and to all confided to your enlightened care, His special Apostolic Benediction.
>
> With the assurance of my high esteem and requesting a share in your prayers, I remain
>
> Yours very sincerely in Christ,
> (Signed) C. Grenof.

To return to the celebration of the Jubilee: All the Sisters knew that nothing would afford more happiness to Mother than to receive the beautiful sacred vessels into which God, Himself, descends at the moment of the Consecration of Holy Mass, but

REV. MOTHER MARY XAVIER, M.S.C.,
Provincial Louisiana Province

there were other lovely presents. Mother received a miniature gilded brigantine with its sails blazoned to the winds, inscribed: **1895-1945—Ave Maria Stella,** signifying the safe passage of Mother's bark through the religious life; two beautiful standing holy water fonts with blue and gold angels, life size, for the chapel, and numerous elaborate pieces of the Sisters' needlework.

After Mother Mary Xavier had addressed a few inspiring words of appreciation, the Sisters sang Reverend Robert J. Stahl, S.M.'s stirring hymn of triumph, **Victoria,** which Mother remarked, "gave a delicate closing touch to the golden date of her anniversary in religious life.' This happy gathering was just a promise of the major celebration that woud take place on the true anniversary, the Feast of Saint Augustine, August 28.

August 28, 1945 witnessed the grandest part of the celebration of Mother Provincial's' Golden Jubilee. The Superiors, and as many of the Sisters from the City missions as could possibly come, filled the chapel for the Jubilee Mass which was celebrated by Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., when His Excellency used for the first time the beautiful sacred vessels given to our dear Mother on August 12 at the close of the retreat. Specially prepared hymns were sung. The whole Community received Holy Communion for Mother's intention. At the close of Mass our Most Reverend Archbishop Rummel paid a tribute to mother:[2]

> "What shall I render to the Lord for all that He has rendered to Me?" These are the sentiments which are uppermost in the mind and heart of the Jubilarian, and it is only right and proper that we should join the Jubilarian in these sentiments; especially, in fervent prayers to Almighty God on this anniversary. There are special souls our dear Lord draws to greater intimacies and communion with Him more completely, more perfectly than others—souls that He calls to labor for the welfare of others, to help others to reach greater intimacy, greater perfection in life. And we know, too, that God's rewards are measured out in accordance with the dignity of the service, in accordance with the efficiency with which that service is discharged.
>
> Our Jubilarian has been one of these souls upon whom God has bestowed special graces, natural and supernatural helps in the vocation to the religious life, in the call to exceptional service in the good of her community and in the remarkable influence she has been able to exert over her spiritual family as well as over those who have been in the past placed in her

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[2] Transcription of His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel's tribute to Mother Mary Xavier, M.deS.C., August 28, 1945.

charge, under her intellectual, moral and even spiritual formation.

Fifty years of service in the religious life are indeed a long span of years—filled with graces innumerable. To view life from the human standpoint, we can feel God has blessed the soul of the Jubilarian in a very extraordinary way and given to her unusual opportunities for acquiring the perfection of her state of life. It would be embarrassing, indeed, were we to specify, but we can legitimately refer to the exceptional influence that the Jubilarian has had in the formation, the development and the expansion of her community as well as in the intensification of its work. For many years, she has been entrusted with authority and with responsibility. She has exercised that trust with humility and efficiency. She has known how to combine it with kindliness and motherliness. For that reason, she has not only won the affection of her community, but also encouraged and inspired the members of her community with higher ideals of appreciation of the religious life and increased for them zeal in the discharge of the duties to which the Community dedicates itself. God's providence in her has been that of a wise, prudent, efficient, achieving leader for her spiritual family.

Surely, then, today all of us, and especially the veterans of the Community, have reason to join generously and wholeheartedly in the prayers and interior thanksgiving offered to Almighty God that the merits that our Jubilarian has acquired in the kingdom of God are great, and that when she comes to face her Divine Master she will not only be greeted with, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the kingdom that has been prepared for you,' but because she has been entrusted with greater responsibilities than others, she will be greeted with, "Well done! Enter thou into a greater reward; a greater honor, a greater glory awaits thee in the kingdom of God." This prayer, I am sure, has risen out of our hearts this morning. Combined with that prayer is the fervent wish and hope that God may spare our Jubilarian in better health, because we are all conscious of the fact that she has been struggling with a health condition for a number of years, and that she will spare herself and not stretch her physical and mental resources to the limit, almost of exhaustion. In this way, through the goodness of Almighty God, she may be spared to the Province for many years. We also pray for her constant progress in perfection and for the welfare of her community to which she has so devotedly attached herself, and to which she has

> for so many years given her strength, her power, her influence for the honor and glory of God and the welfare of souls.
>
> May Our Blessed Lady, Patroness of the Community, Our Mother of Sorrows, spare her sorrow, disappointment and sadness, and give her the grace to enjoy the happiness and the peace of God. And when God calls her, may she find then the fullness of graces for the labors she has endured these fifty years of her religious life.

After Mass, a community breakfast, and, later, a dinner in celebration of the event rounded out the program of the day. At dinner, Mother Provincial was presented with a handsomely framed spiritual bouquet, the prayerful offerings of her devoted and grateful daughters. Throughout the dinner the Sisters' band played. Various tributes were given by Sisters in the name of their companions. As a climax to her great happiness on that wonderful day, our dear Mother received a cable from His Holiness, Pope Pius XII felicitating her and imparting His Apostolic blessing to Mother and to all under her care. Mother remarked that of all her cherished remembrances of the event, this cable from His Holiness exceeded all others.

Throughout the day the beauty of the sanctuary of the chapel was enhanced by the magnificently-painted antipendium on the altar, the elaborate handiwork and gift of the Teresian Sisters, and the rich golden satin altar-cloth, the gift of one of Mother Provincials nieces.

One feature of the celebration that Mother treasured most was that the Jubilee celebration was reserved just to the Community. The Sisters were bound to secrecy throughout all the preparations, and no one outside of Mother's immediate relatives and the Sisters knew of the approaching Jubilee. Reverend James J. O'Brien, S.J.,[3] a novitate companion of Mother's Jesuit brother, Reverend Thomas Aloysius Haggerty, S.J., dedicated two of his poems to Mother on her Jubilee Day. A happy ending to this glorious day came in the evening with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament given by Father O'Brien, S.J. In recalling this happy occasion of her Golden Jubilee, Mother always adds: "I think the picture of all my devoted Sisters gathered about me first on the twelfth in the Academy parlors, and again on the twenty-eighth in our refectory, will linger with me always."

During the War Period Mother Provincial felt it was a privilege for the Louisiana Province to extend to His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, a token of the Congregation's affection at Christmas, which could be used in His charity fund. Knowing that the French

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[3] Author of SAGART SINGING, collection of poems.

Motherhouse was cut off from all outside communication, Mother continued to send this offering in the name of the Congregation, doubling the amount in 1946 because of the great suffering of the starving people of Europe, who enjoy His Holiness' fatherly care. In a letter from the Vatican February 17, 1947, signed by J. B. Montini, Substitute, His Holiness conveyed His blessing to Mother and the Community:

> It is my honored duty to acknowledge the receipt of your generous offering of $200.00 which you so thoughtfully forwarded to the Holy Father through the kindness of the Apostolic Delegate, as a token of filial devotion and loyalty at the Feast of Christmas.
>
> His Holiness now bids me assure you and the members of your esteemed community of His sentiments of devotion and attachment which inspired His beloved daughters in making Him this offering.
>
> The Holy Father is consoled to know that the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross in Louisiana remember His intentions in a special way in their prayers and as a token of his paternal solicitude, He most cordially imparts to you, Mother Provincial, and to all confided to your enlightened care, His special Apostolic Benediction.

Besides this, special blessings were received from the Holy Father Pope Pius XII, one through Very Reverend Harry L. Crane, S.J., Provincial of the Jesuits in New Orleans, and one through Sister Mary of St. Cajetan, Doriocourt, during her visit to Rome in 1946.

Mother Mary of St. Julien announced in Circular Letter 326 the prospect of a General Chapter being held in the spring of 1946:

> War prevented us from holding our General Chapter at the regular time, and we obtained from the Sacred Congregation of Religious the prolongation of the powers of all the officers elected by this assembly. Although the world conflict is over, sailing is still too dangerous to allow our American Sisters to cross the Ocean presently. We expect it to be possible next spring; but as nothing is certain, we cannot appoint the day. As soon as you have received this letter of convocation you shall read in Community Rule XXIII of our Rules of Administration; "On the Convocation of the General Chapter" replacing Article 659 by Article 22 of Constitution V, and suppressing Article 660 and 661. Then you shall read the Rule for elections.
>
> I deem it useless, my dear Daughters, to remind you of the importance of this meeting in which are to be elected those who will govern the Institute, and the best means of promoting the

> sanctification of its members and the development of its works will be studied.[1]

The General Council of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross meeting at the Mother House, Précigné, December 10, 1945, gave Mother Provincial this tribute of confidence:

> The General Council congratulates Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial Superior of Louisiana, on her able government, on her unwaning devotedness, and, above all, for not only maintaining the religious spirit, but also for intensifying it throughout the whole Province during so many years. As she, herself, says, "Without the interior life, no apostleship can fructify." But the interior life itself is nourished by exercises of piety and particularly by meditation. Let then, each one be faithful in making her daily meditation.
>
> The General Councillors unite with Reverend Mother to offer their gratitude to all the Superioresses of our houses who have so generously helped the Mother House in its distress. They beg Our Lord to reward them a hundredfold and to give them the recompense promised to those who "clothed Him in the persons of the poor.'
>
> The progress of education in the Province, the predominance given to the study of religion in all the schools, and the ever-increasing number of pupils are a subject of admiration for our Mother General and her councillors. We congratulate Mother Provincial who is the very soul of all this progress, as well as our dear Sisters who respond so well to her desires and efforts. May Almighty God continue to help you, in order that the harvest of souls may become more abundant and workers more and more numerous.

Consideration is given here to the General Superiors and to all those Superiors of the Province who were called upon to meet ordeals that tried both the strength of the body and tested the faith of the soul. Great were those Superiors[4] of the Marianites and great were the Sisters who stood loyally by them! Across these pages have moved teachers and leaders whose names never fail to conjure up in the memory some outstanding trait of theirs, scholarship, leadership, guidance. Memory clamors with many others, too numerous to cite, but too dear ever to forget. If in its hundred years in Louisiana, the Marianite Community has come out of every trial victoriously, it is because it could count upon loyalty from within the ranks of Holy Cross. The Superiors, into whose hands was entrusted the direction of the Community, were sustained by the knowledge that back of them were the closed ranks of their Sisters. Honor and tribute be paid to the courage, the steadfast determination and faith of those many great, far-seeing Superiors from 1848 to the present day; as worthy, also, of admiration and applause are the mission houses, brave, loyal, and true, that supported them.

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[4] In the appendix will be found a list of the Superior Generals; also one of the Provincial Superiors.

August 12, 1946 marked the election of Reverend Mother Mary of St. Odile, successor to Mother Mary of St. Julien, Superior General of the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross. The new General Superior is well known for her work of nursing in the French Hospital, New York, over a period of twenty-five years, and for the past eight years as Superior of the Hospital. The Louisiana province, through its Provincial Superior, had formed affectionate ties with Mother Mary of St. Odile while she served in the capacity of Superior in New York. The Sisters of the Province welcomed the news of Mother Mary of St. Odile's election, and considered it one of God's blessings to the Congregation. Knowing the mind of the former Superior General, Mother Mary of St. Julien, Mother Mary of St. Odile continues to rule the Community along a similar pattern. The new Assistant General, Mother Mary of St. Cajetan Doriocourt, Provincial Superior of the Community's houses in France, is well known in Louisiana for her genuine religious spirit, her patient and untiring zeal, her great devotedness and loyalty to the Provincial, co-operating wholeheartedly with her in all her undertakings, while serving in the capacity first of Econome, then that of Assistant Provincial and Local Superior of the Provincial House (1934-1946). Sincerest good wishes were extended to both Mother Mary of St. Odile and Mother Mary of St. Cajetan together with the Sisters who comprise their General Council at Précigné, France.

The Superior General's visit in the fall of 1946 was a great joy to her devoted daughters of this Province. The Sisters' joy was increased by the presence of their dear Sister Mary of St. Cajetan, whose loss is so deeply felt by all in Louisiana. The realization of Reverend Mother of St. Odile's great need of such devoted assistance has reconciled those of the Louisiana Province to the sacrifice of this dear Sister to the Mother House in France. All are now reconciled and happy in knowing that Reverend Mother enjoys Sister Mary of St. Cajetan's devoted and efficient help.

Accompanied by Sister Mary of St. Cajetan, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Odile arrived at the air port November 25, 1946, and was met by a large delegation of Sisters. Likewise, on the departure of these distinguished guests a large assembly of the Sisters accompanied them to the plane. During the reception tendered Reverend Mother, Reverend Henry C. Bezou, Archdiocesan Superintendent of Parochial Schools, assured the Superior General that "the Marianites must be doubling themselves" for that is the only way in which their numbers could teach so many pupils—9,500 in the elementary grades; 3,000 in the Community's High Schools throughout Louisiana.

After the news of Mother Mary Xavier's election for a third time to the important office of Provincial Superior, His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., addressed the Community August 22, 1946, choosing Loyalty as his theme. All those Sisters making the second retreat, as well as the Sisters of the City missions who could come, enjoyed the privilege of hearing His Excellency's tribute. He began by offering an apology for breaking into the retreat. His Excellency explained that if Mother Provincial had been elected as most Provincials are chosen in other Communities, he would probably have been present at the election and would have had a chance to speak to the Community after the election. Since that was not possible, His Excellency took advantage of the Community's assembly for the retreat to express his hearty congratulations to Mother Provincial on the confidence and the trust placed in her by the Major Superior and the delegates to the General Chapter, and to assure Mother of his prayers and co-operation.

Before taking up his topic of Loyalty, the Archbishop recalled his canonical visitation of the Community a few years previous to this date. From this point of his conference, his words are quoted:

> I would like to say that I still remember with a great deal of satisfaction the edification that I derived from the visitation that I made a few years ago. That gave indication on the whole that the community is harmonious and united; that there prevails the spirit of charity and good will, mutual understanding between the members of the community and the Superiors, and that there was evident the desire to be docile and obedient to the Rules, the Constitutions, and the traditions of the community, and, of course, also, to the Superiors. Now that, I think, is as fine a compliment, a tribute, I can pay to any community, and I pay it to you not in the spirit of flattery but in the spirit of sincerity.
>
> I have really a great admiration for the community and for all of its members, and it causes me little anxiety. . . . It is something to be extremely grateful for.[5]

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[5] Transcription from shorthand account of His Excellency's address to the Sisters August 22, 1946.

After this tribute, His Excellency urged all of the Sisters to be loyal to the Community, saying that they should feel that the Communiy is the best and the finest expression of the ideals of the religious life for them; that they should uphold it at all times, refraining from criticizing it, carrying out the spirit of its Constitutions, for it is the spirit in which the Rules and regulations are observed that is the real test of loyalty. His Excellency further urged loyalty to Superiors, recognizing in them the representatives of God. His Excellency urged all to be very faithful and loyal in thought, in action, and in speech, stressing candor, honesty, and sincerity in the Sisters' relations with their Superiors, His Excellency advised:

> If something goes wrong, something is out of order, take it up with your Superior. Talk it over with her. Uphold your Superiors when others are inclined to do otherwise. The Superiors need your help, your good will, your co-operation. Your community life should be like home life, family life, working as one unit and not going in diverse directions. Make this fraternal charity evident, make it real, and the result will be a happy community life.[6]

The Archbishop also emphasized the necessity of fidelity on the part of the Local Superiors, their responsibility for applying the rules and the regulations of their Major Superiors and for carrying out the full program proposed by them.

The Sisters, themselves, claim the right to say that beginning with that memorable March 26, 1932 when Mother Mary Xavier laid aside her authority as Local Superior of the Provincial House and Assistant Provincial to become Provincial Superior, the glory that illumines each figure in that long line of loyal and self-sacrificing women finds its brightest culmination in her who now rules the destinies of her beloved Marianites as she has done for the past sixteen years.

In New Orleans where Mother's noviceship and first years of professed religious life were spent, her name is held in benediction: Algiers, the parish of Holy Name of Mary, knew her as an active, enthusiastic Superior for twenty-two years; Franklin, St. John Academy, rightly regards her as its very own as she was a boarder there in her childhood days at the Academy and returned in 1919 to spend seven happy years as Superior of St. John Academy. Called to the office of Mother Provincial at a time of depression[1] (1932-38) and re-elected at a serious hour in world history (1938) when Europe, in which was situated the cradle of the

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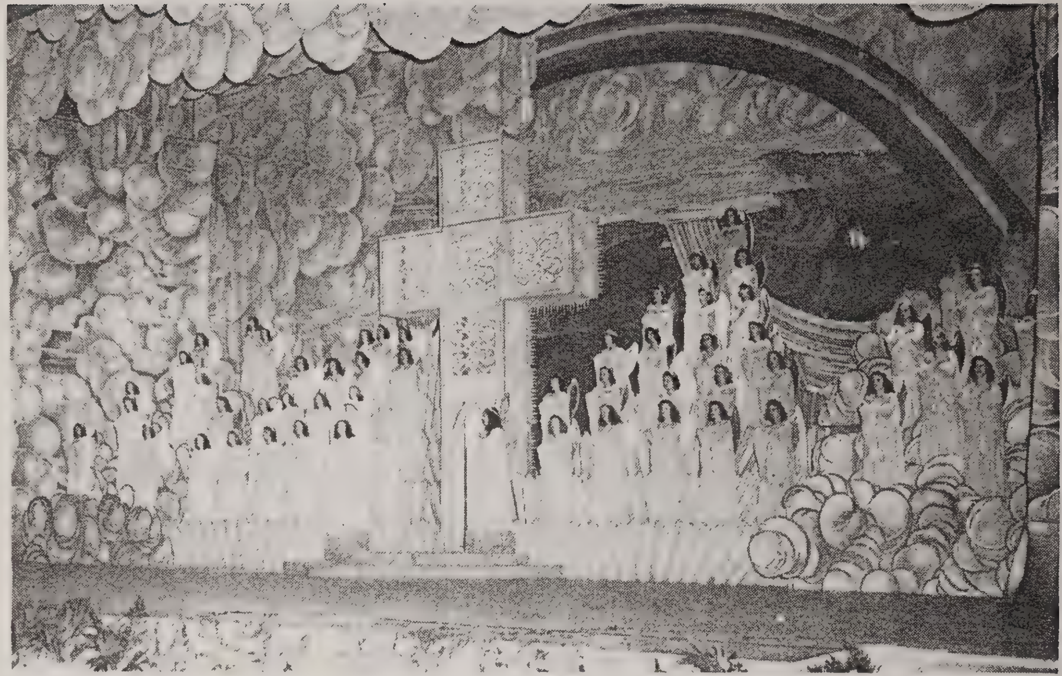
[6] Transcription of His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel, S.T.D.'s tribute to Mother Mary Xavier August 22, 1946, in his address at the Provincial House to the Sisters during the second retreat.



"Canticle of Praise" — Centennial Pageant

community, France, was involved in the turmoil of World War II, Mother Mary Xavier proved anew the wisdom of the Marianites' God-directed choice in providing the Community with a Superior capable of leading the community out of every difficulty and of bringing it to the present day, crowned with blessings. Her intrepid confidence in her Bursar—Saint Joseph—whom she regards as protector of the Community's interests—has enabled Mother Mary Xavier to accomplish great things for the province. The Sisters considered it a rare privilege when told they would enjoy her guidance and leadership through a third term of office. Admirably fitted to direct the Sisters in whatever phase of action they might be engaged, Mother Provincial is able to enter, as few others can, into their difficulties, to advise, and to direct with a wisdom born of long experience.

The archives may preserve for posterity the record of Mother's leadership, of her inspiration, but her monument will forever remain in the affectionate hearts of her Sisters the cherished, indelible remembrance of her life. Calmly and courageously her religious life shaped itself through many years guiding the helm of Holy Name of Mary School, twenty-two years, and St. John Academy, Franklin, Louisiana; but most treasured of all is the remembrance of her years spent first as Assistant Provincial and Local Superior at Holy Angels Academy 1927-1932, and for the past sixteen years as Provincial Superior. Here is and ever has been the belief that "What one is called upon to do, one is called upon to do with one's whole strength." 'Her wonderful energy in carrying out plans exemplifies this. In the future are plans for a new Academy of the Holy Angels with a modern Auditorium; also, plans for the celebration of the Marianites' Centenary in Louisiana in 1948, the cause which provoked this column into being. And who could capture or match the talent and enthusiasm, the loyalty to her Community and to the Academy of the Holy Angels that carry Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty) through such magnificent dramatic achievements as her religious pageants? Turning her musical and dramatic talents to the glory of God and the advancement of the schools, Mother has produced and presented nineteen never-to-be-forgotten pageants, bringing about the **renascence** of Catholic pageantry in old New Orleans. The twentieth pageant, which formed part of the Centennial celebration and was entitled **A Canticle of Praise,** took its rightful place among those acclaimed most outstanding, such as Lourdes, A Canticle of Love, both of which have a cherished corner in Mother's heart.

Pageantry has not been the only outlet for Mother's dramatic art. Many have been the pupils of the Academy who were trained for oratorical contests under mission auspices. The work of the missions has always been nearest to Mother's heart. Her grandest dream was realized in December, 1946, when for the first time one of her own Sisters was sent to the Holy Cross mission, Holy Rosary Convent, Tejgaon, Dacca District, Bengal, India. Sister Mary of St. Leo (Cavell), Holy Angels Alumna, Ex-'31, volunteered for this mission work. Sister has adapted herself readily to this work during her first year in India, proof of which is seen in the chapter, **Horizons from Centennial Heights.**

Ambitious, alert to new needs, Mother Mary Xavier never forgets that there is an unending processions of newcomers to her community. She has each Marianite Sister finely schooled to enable her to find her rank among the teaching staff of the Congregation. Mother Mary Xavier's presence and her life of accomplishment continue as a never-ending inspiration to her Sisters who have been privileged to know her and to work with her as one always alert in the Master's service. As Principal, Superior, Provincial, Mother Mary Xavier has been true to her task of living solely for the beautiful, the edifying undertakings of the religious life.

The best in life has been said to be based on the touching of minds and spirits. Thus it is that her Sisters pay this tribute of devotion to Mother Mary Xavier, bound as they are by special ties of deepest gratitude for her unflagging interest in their work, for her counsel and direction, and they now ask as a fuller mark of her love for them that she accept this pledge of their love, their continued loyalty and co-operation, built upon genuine sincerity, for they know whatever lies before them Mother's life radiates such an indefinable influence it will ennoble, it will dignify their every answer to the call for duty within the ranks of the Marianite Congregation. Thus it is the Sisters of the Louisiana Province salute one whose life reflects for them the ideals and the principles ever to be coveted by all who claim the honor of her leadership and sign themselves affectionately her obedient daughters in Our Lady of Seven Dolors.

Here at the Provincial House there are hallowed spots. The Provincial House itself is one of these, as it is the scene of Novitiate days, of the Sisters' first labors for the Community, of their reunion during summer vacation school and later at the annual retreat. "Finally, it is, and will be, the place where all will come to spend their declining days in the service of Holy Cross—perhaps, days of sickness and preparation for death. These are thoughts that induce us to love ever more this "Kind Mother" who stands by us staunchly both in life and in death."[7] But there is also the truly hallowed spot within the Provincial House unit, the chapel of Our Lady of Seven Dolors. Many miracles of grace have occurred here and continue to occur when soul battles are fought and won.

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[7] Letter from Mother Mary of St. Julien dated French Hospital, 330 West 30 Street, New York, N. Y., May 24, 1939 to Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial Supeiror.

The chapel is indeed a hallowed spot for every Marianite, as it is the scene of her investiture ceremony when she received the Holy habit of a religious. There are, though, some older members in the community who remember receiving their Holy habit, some of them from the Foundress, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, in the old chapel, where the Infirmary is now located. In the present Chapel Postulants make their first visit to the Blessed Sacrament, receive the Reverend Chaplain's blessing the evening of their entrance, which little ceremony is terminated by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Our Lord, Himself, comes forth from the Tabernacle to bless them as they start to walk the paths of Holy Cross. As novices, they will claim the privilege of caring for the upkeep of the body of the chapel; as Professed religious, they will reserve to themselves the right to care for the sanctuary, where the Vows of religious Profession are pronounced.

In the late evening, at the twilight hour of the day, with only the glow of the lamp in the sanctuary, the Sisters seek here that peace of soul that can be gained nowhere else as it can in the True Presence of their Eucharistic King. In the light of dawn, they gather for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to make their first offering of the day.

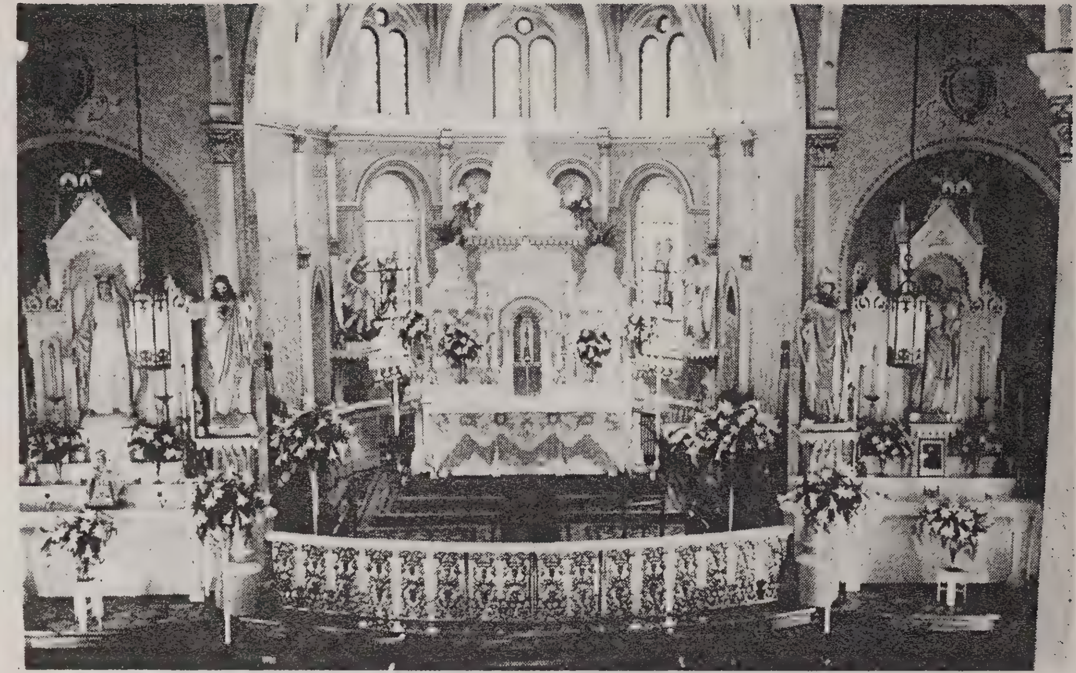
Here in this Centennial year the Sisters pray to become exemplary religious, that this may redound to their community in the form of many vocations to their ranks; that the Rules and Constitutions which their Holy Founder wrote for them and Reverend Charles Moreau, C.S.C., the Founder's nephew, had finally approved by Rome for the Community, may be kept intact for the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross of the next Century; that the Holy Spirit may inspire souls in sufficient numbers to carry on the work of the Congregation.

If one seeks a monument to this administration's credit, all one needs to do is to look about him. Buildings have been renovated. In 1934 and again in 1940 under the present administration the chapel was redecorated. The stained glass panels over the high altar contain images of the instruments of Our Lord's Passion, the sponge, the nails, the crown of thorns, the spear that pierced His Heart, the ladder and the winding sheet. Saints Joachim and Anne are the figures of the windows that flank the Epistle and Gospel sides of the altar, respectively. On the ceiling around the dome are figures painted—the Four Evangelists' symbols, which also symbolize the four gospels which would nourish the soul life of the Church and be spread to the four corners of the earth. The monograms of Our Lord Jesus Christ PX, and I.H.S., form the design of the sanctuary walls; that of the **fleur de lis**, the design of the background of the side altars of Saint Joseph and Our Lady. The **fleur de lis** gives the impression of the French background of the Community, and as it is a lily symbolizes the purity of the lives of Our Lady and of Saint Joseph. The Eucharistic vine and grape motif is wrought out of iron, forming the communion railing of "iron lace," for which New Orleans is famous. The Immaculate Heart of Mary, transpierced with seven swords is carved out of the main altar immediately under the tabernacle. As the Marianites raise their eyes to receive Our Lord in Holy Communion, their eyes rest upon this image of His Mother's' pierced heart, causing them to reflect upon the price she paid for their Priceless Gift of Christ Himself in the Eucharist. Over the high archway of the sanctuary dome two angels point to a cross encircled by a crown under which appears the Congregation's symbol: **Spes Unica—Our Only Hope.**

As the Institution to which the chapel is attached is dedicated to the angelic spirits, the statue of the Guardian Angel appears on the Epistle side and that of St. Michael, the Archangel, on the Gospel side of the altar, an ever-inspiring source of meditation, for it is not hard to conjure up in the imagination the rest of the angelic hosts that in reality fill the sanctuary each day at the Consecration of the Sacred Species.

The Pieta over the high altar as well as the Sacred Heart statue are both from Paris, France. The metallic tabernacle was the gift of a group of graduates. In 1940 the stations of the cross were done in the colors of the school, blue background with gold figures, through the beneficence of Alumnae members. The walls were done in buff shade. Neat oak pews replaced the large mahogany ones. Twice the flooring has been renovated; at first, by the laying of hardwood floors; later, by the laying of Holstein rubber tiles. A new lighting system was installed. New rubber pew kneelers were added. Formerly, the chapel woodwork was walnut-stained, but the whole interior grew in beauty when painted white.

Fitting it is that two of the outstanding deceased Provincial Superiors, Mother Mary of St. Margaret Cortona (Haggerty) and Mother Mary of St. Cesaria (McDonnell) have memorial windows—the first, the scene of Our Lord's Agony in the Garden; the second, the death scene of Saint Joseph assisted by Jesus and Mary. It was on the Feast of Our Lord's Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane on which the Constitutions were finally approved by Rome, and Saint Joseph is Patron of the Community, so these two windows keep these facts before the Sisters' eyes, not that they were erected for that purpose, but they serve to commemorate these facts. Until 1945, when the present blue-robed, life-size angel Holy Water fonts were placed in the chapel as a Golden Jubilee



INTERIOR OF CHAPEL OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS
Provincial House, New Orleans

gift to Mother Provincial, the font to the memory of Mother Mary of the Desert, another prominent deceased member, served as a reminder to the Community of the saving waters of their Baptism as they made the life-giving sign of the Cross and doubled its indulgence by using holy water.

Other inspiring scenes depicted in the stained-glass windows are those of the Annunciation, which reminds every Marianite of Mary's response to the Archangel Gabriel's message, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord." This window serves to recall to the Sisters their own response to the call to the religious life when they, like Mary, became the Lord's "handmaids." The window depicting Saint Patrick, the patron of Ireland, is a source of comfort, as is also the statue of Saint Patrick, to those who hail from the Emerald Isle. The image of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in yet another window claims many affectionate, fervent glances from the Sisters as they meditate upon the stirring message the Sacred Heart gave to Saint Margaret Mary, which set the world aflame with new ardor for the pierced heart of the Savior, to Whom the Sisters pray fervently that they may deserve to chant with the angels His praises for all eternity.

Finally, it will be from this chapel that the bell, "Francis Xavier Basil Moreau Stanislaus," will ring out the tidings of the Centenary in Louisiana, the profound **Te Deum** of thanksgiving and the anthem of praise, the **Magnificat** will ascend during the Centennial ceremonies; the **De Profundis** for the deceased members as well as benefactors will be sounded throughout the days of the Centennial in April, 1948.

Among the most impressive events the year 1946 held for the Community were the ceremonies January 25 and February 19 on which dates occurred the consecration of the Academy and the Convent to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This Enthronement Ceremony of the convent occurred in the chapel at 5 p. m. February 19, the anniversary of the approbation of the Rulees of the Congregation. The side altar of our Blessed Mother was decorated with lights and many pictures and statues of the Sacred Heart that were to receive a special blessing. Reverend Father Conroy, S.S.J. of Xaxier University gave an inspiring sermon on devotion to the Sacred Heart. Hymns were sung, and the statues and pictures blessed. This exercise terminated with Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament. For one hundred years this house has reechoed the sound of the praises of the Sacred Heart. It has heard voices dear to the hearts of the Marianites, teaching love of duty, ardent charity, zeal for souls, and above all the virtue so dear to the Sacred Heart—humility. The Marianites gathered together to enthrone the Sacred Heart in their home, as it were to consecrate their home anew to His glory and to His love. Remembering that Christ promised to bless every place where the Image of His Heart is exposed, the Sisters implored Him on this occasion to bless their religious family, and to grant that His Image would remain ever imprinted upon their hearts.

On this day of special joy, the Sisters prayed especially for blessings for Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien who was then governing the Congregation from afar; for Mother Provincial, and for all the Mothers who have governed Louisiana in the past; for all the Sisters who have lived in this Provincial House, and all the children confided to the Sisters' care in the past and in the present. May the Heart of our Savior overshadow the Marianites with His special love and protection and grant that after walking in His Divine footsteps, by love and by sacrifice, in a later epoch of Marianite History, whether twenty-five or fifty years hence, either from heaven or on earth, the Sisters may continue to pray for the new generation of Marianites that will repeat again by its acts and its praises as the Marianites did February 19, 1945, "Praise to the Heart of Our Saviour Who wrought our salvation, to Him be honor and glory forevermore!"

May the prayers, the hopes, and the good example of the Marianites cause God to make fruitful the expanding field of labor opened to the zeal of the Congregation, cause Him to bless the Province of Louisiana and its centenary. The Sisters feel it their duty and pleasure to thank Mother Mary of St. Julien, ex-Superior General, and their present Provincial Superior, Mother Mary Xavier, for their great devotedness to all the labors that were assigned to them through two difficult six-year terms of office and an extended term of two years throughout the war period. The Louisiana Province will move forward on the financial, intellectual, and spiritual impetus from Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty)'s administrations.

Some of the Community's recent foundations have been those of St. Agnes School, Jefferson Highway; St. Joseph's School, Lower Coast, Algiers; St. Mary of the Angels School, New Orleans, and the Little Flower School, Arnaudville. These evidences of growth may be justly considered a proof of heaven's benediction.

The Provincial House rejoices in this growth and increasing usefulness of its daughters throughout the state. While it gives to the missions freely, it suffers no diminution of its life-sustaining powers. As an individual educational institution, the Academy of the Holy Angels still leads the most ambitious of the Marianite foundations. Many have entered the Community from the towns where the Sisters are established. Holy Angels' students, likewise, return to their Alma Mater as her spiritual daughters.

PART THREE

THE CONVERGING RAYS OF HOLY CROSS

"With Thy continual help . . . . ."

CHAPTER EIGHT

ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI BANKS

WHEN DE SOTO reached the Mississippi a century before La Salle, he reared aloft in mid-stream the banner of the Cross, and gave the name **Immaculate Conception** to the mighty river which flows within ten blocks of the Marianites' first New Orleans educational institution called in 1851 the Immaculate Conception Industrial School for Girls.

In 1718 Bienville landed at New Orleans and planted the cross. He was bent upon building upon the site a great metropolis. Later, in 1851, in the Metropolis Bienville founded, a Marianite Sister of Holy Cross, Sister Mary of the Five Wounds, under the standard of the cross, was bent upon developing out of the elements of an Industrial School a permanent foothald for her Congregation.

The basis for the security of Sister Mary of the Five Wounds' industrial school, which later developed into a Girls' Orphanage, through the seventy years of its existence, might be found in a revealing thought[1] that God gave to a recluse near Norwich, England, six hundred years ago in regard to the security of the universe itself:

> And in this our good Lord showed me a little thing, the quantity of a hazel nut, lying in the palm of my hand, as it seemed to me, and it was as round as a ball. I looked thereon with the eye of my understanding and thought, "What may this be?" And it was answered thus: "It is all that is made." I marveled how it might last, for methought it might suddenly have fallen to naught for very littleness.
>
> And I was answered in my understanding, "It lasteth, and ever shall: for God loveth it."

In this little thing I saw three properties,
The first is, that God made it.
The second is, that God loveth it,
The third is, that God keepeth it.

In the year 1951 Mother Mary of the Five Wounds held within the palm of her hands, as it were, not a hazel nut but something almost as small—the making of the future Girls' Orphanage. Truly she also might have thought that for its very littleness it might have suddenly fallen to nothing; but when she communicated her difficulties relative to her proposed plan for an industrial school for destitute young girls, it was with paternal benevolence that Reverend A. J. Perche (later Archbishop Perche of New Orleans) approved of the undertaking. He told Mother she should not allow herself to be dissuaded from her plan, and assured her she would succeed.

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[1] **Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love**, one of the spiritual classics of the world, containing the sixteen revelatinns of the passion and death of Our Redeemer made to Dame Juliana.

In a similar manner might the beginnings of the Marianite Sisters' leading institution, the Academy of the Holy Angels, be traced. Because every Catholic school is truly an act of Providence on the part of Almighty God, it may be said too that "God made the Academy of the Holy Angels." Certain it is that "He loveth it, for "He keepeth it" and has kept it through all these years. The Academy came into being simultaneously with the Industrial School for Girls but both were operated separately; the Academy as a day and boarding school for girls, the Industrial School as an orphanage. Through the Academy's struggling years, through its growing years, and through its mature years God has kept it and has shown His love for it by the many blessings bestowed upon it.

The beginnings of the Industrial School for Girls were purely social and charitable in nature. Sister Mary of the Five Wounds had gathered together some sixteen girls who ranged in age from fifteen to seventeen years. These girls were too old to be placed in the Girls' Asylum operated by the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent De Paul, and yet too young to be left to themselves. Sister Mary of the Five Wounds sought to aid them to become self-supporting. A benefactress, Madam Le Baron, offered a house for rent. The girls were assembled and their work directed. Five of them had to be prepared for First Communion; all of them had to be taught the English language.

In a letter of November 27, 1851, addressed to Sister Mary of the Five Wounds, Very Reverend Basil Moreau, after Reverend Edward Sorin, C.S.C., had approved the project, expressed his approbation:

> Most heartily, my dear daughter, do I approve of your enterprise for an Industrial School for orphan girls, and I am sure that our Most Holy Father, the Pope, will also approve of it with pleasure.[2]

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[2] Letter from the Founder, Very Reverend Basil Moreau, November 27, 1851, dated at Le Mans, France.

During the first six months' trial of the Industrial School, the Ursulines had both fed and clothed the Sisters' charges. Sister Mary of the Five Wounds now needed room for thirty girls. She asked Reverend Father Sorin for two Sisters to superintend them and to direct their work or she would have to abandon the enterprise.

The Superioress of the Ursulines offered the loan of a small house outside of the cloister of their convent, which she even had repaired for that purpose and which was sufficiently commodious, by using the attic or garret for a dormitory, to accommodate the thirty girls. Her offer was most gratefully accepted, and the girls were installed in their new home the beginning of April, 1852. Sister Mary of St. Anne was sent from the Boys' Asylum to take charge of the girls until the two Sisters who had been asked for should arrive.

Sister Mary of the Desert and Sister Mary of St. Alphonsus arrived in New Orleans on May 3, 1852. Immediately they began their assigned tasks: Sister Mary of the Desert directed the sewing classes, and Sister Mary of St. Alphonsus, the English classes. Another sister from the Boys Asylum was sent to superintend the kitchen and the laundry. Sister Mary of St. Anne returned to the Asylum to resume her duties there.

In December, 1852, Reverend Father Sorin, C.S.C., again visited New Orleans, preached the Sisters' retreat, and named Sister Mary of the Five Wounds Superioress of the Industrial School.[3]

At the end of the year 1852, the number of the children of the Industrial School had increased to such an extent that they were beginning again to be inconvenienced for want of sufficient room.

During the worst yellow fever epidemic New Orleans experienced, in 1853, the girls of the Industrial School were exposed to the fever, but a merciful Providence preserved them, as only two of them had the fever and both recovered.

The **Catholic Propagator** of July 16, 1853, took note of the fact, "Last Sunday, the 10th of July, the Archbishop, Monsignor Blanc, confirmed in the chapel of the Ursulines, fourteen young girls of the Catholic Industrial School of the Third District."[4] As related in an earlier chapter,[5] in 1855, the year following that in which the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed,[6] the orphans were moved to a brick building corner

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[3] **Chronicles**, 1852, p. 37, Marianites of Holy Cross, New Orleans.
[4] **Chronicles**, New Orleans Provincial House, Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, 1853, p. 42.
[5] **Supra**, p.———.
[6] The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed in 1854.

Rampart and Elmira Streets (now Gallier Street.) This new home was called the Immaculate Conception Orphanage.

Sister Mary of the Five Wounds, with the aid of Mother Mary of St. Alphonsus, and the added energies of Reverend Patrick F. Sheil, C.S.C., their Provincial Superior, purchased in 1855 a portion of the old Barthelmy Macarty plantation.[7] The residence erected on this site provided ample living quarters for approximately twenty boarders of the growing Academy.

All classes during these early years were conducted in both English and French in a small frame structure on the community's grounds. School opened at half-past eight in the morning, and, with the exception of a fifteen-minute recess at ten o'clock in the morning and the dinner hour, was not dismissed until fourt-thirty in the afternoon.[8]

As an index to the subjects taught, the record lists Botany, Chemistry, Physiology, Sacred and Profane History, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Algebra, Geometry, Composition, Translation, Instrumental and Vocal Music, Painting, Tapestry, the making of Wax Fruits and Flowers, and Plain Sewing.[9]

One of the old roll books, ruled for twenty-two pupils, contains data of educational interest: Ruled for a six-day school week, Monday through Saturday, the students' notes for English and French subjects arranged on opposite pages enable the research student to gain an insight into the struggle these French girls of **antebellum** days experienced in mastering the English language; for instance, one gaining an average of 29% for English shows an average of 100% for French on the following page.[10]

Though the panic of 1857 began to be felt in New Orleans in October of that year, and because of its attendant economic depression attendance at educational institutions was affected, the Marianites sought enthusiastically to advance the cause of learning: Reverend Patrick F. Sheil, C.S.C., President, Mother Mary of the Passion, Provincial Superior, Mother Mary of St. Alphonsus, Local Superior, Sister Mary of the Nativity, Sister Mary of Calvary, Sister Mary of St. Helen, Sister Mary of the Desert, and Sister Mary of St. Chantal were the principal officers when "in March, 1857 the Congregation was incorporated under the laws of Louisiana to found schools and asylums, and to promote religion and education."[11]

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[7] Information secured from the 1855 **Ledger** of the Acadmey of the Holy Angels.

[8] Recollection of a veteran, Sister Mary of St. Bernardine, M.deS.C., 1943.

[9] **A.H.A. Boarders' Record for 1860.**

[10] Roll Book of Professor Wimmer, who taught several of the classes besides those for Music; **cf.** Academy Record for 1860.

[11] **Chronicles,** (Unpublished manuscript of Catherine B. Dillon), Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, New Orleans, p. 7.

Shortly afterwards, the Southern states were called upon by the little state of South Carolina to fly the Palmetto Flag as a signal of the impending war between the states.[12] Lincoln imposed the blockade against southern ports April 19, 1861[13] and since the City had received its subsistence from Mobile, through the lakes, from the Red River sector, and from Texas, New Orleans was faced with starvation.[14] What food was on hand was sold at such exorbitant prices by speculating merchants, only the wealthy could eat. A free market was in operation in the new, unused iron waterworks building which was situated at the foot of Canal street on the neutral ground.[15]

The fluctuation in the price of flour alone during the war years is ample proof of the privations the residents of New Orleans must have experienced:[16]

> In March, 1863, flour sold for $25 a barrel;
> In January, 1864, flour sold for $95 a barrel;
> In January, 1865, flour sold for $1,000 a barrel

Having lived in an age of air-raid sirens and air supremacy with its attendant noise of heavy bombers overhead, the present generation is capable of judging the terror which must have struck at the hearts of the Sisters and students of the young Academy when the alarm bells rang throughout the city and the sound of cannonading was audible, announcing the capture of New Orleans by Farragut's fleet.[17] Within ten blocks of the river, the occupants of the Academy must have witnessed the panic of the people and they must have seen the reflection of the flames when steamboats, ships, cotton, sugar, molasses, tobacco were given to the flames.[18]

The Community's historian for 1862 tells of the dire need the Sisters experienced. Mother Mary of St. Alphonsus appealed to General Benjamin F. Butler, the Federal Commanding Officer, who sent full army rations for the Sisters and half rations for the children.

Twin disaster to the blockade was the fantastic fiscal policy of the Confederate, Loisiana, and New Orleans governments. Fluctuations in the currency, like those cited below, sent the prices of food and materials skyward:

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[12] Jacob Barker, **The Rebellion: Its Consequences**, p. 112.

[13] James R. Soley, **The Blockade and the Cruisers**, p. 35.

[14] Adelaide Frances Elliott, "Feeding New Orleans During the Civil War," (Unpublished thesis) Tulane University Theses, V, (1937), 123.

[15] **The Daily Crescent** (New Orleans, August 2, and 7, 1861.).

[16] A. C. Gordon, "Hard Times in the Confederacy," **Century Magazine**, XIV (September 1888) 764.

[17] John Smith Kendall, **History of New Orleans**, II, 262.

[18] Jacob Barker, **op. cit.**, p. 115.

> By the end of 1861 a gold dollar was worth a dollar and twenty cents in currency; by the end of 1862, it was worth three dollars; a year later, twenty; and before the final collapse, sixty-one dollars in paper was paid for one dollar in gold.[19]

Despite these vicissitudes, the frame buildings on the ground owned by the Marianite Sisters were demolished March 19, 1862, the foundation for the new Academy building was laid, and its cornerstone blessed.

Under the patronage and encouragement of His Lordship, the Most Reverend John Marie Odin, and the guiding influence of Mother Mary of Holy Cross (Haggerty,) the Academy building was completed and dedicated on the Feast of the Holy Angels, October 2, 1865. On February 2, 1866, it became a chartered educational institution under the laws of Louisiana, with Reverend Patrick F. Sheil, C.S.C. as its first president.[20]

The bloodiest battles of modern times can scarcely compare with the ravages of yellow fever and cholera which were epidemic in 1866 and 1867, as well as that of smallpox; yet the Academy continued to progress. Inspired by the courage and selflessness of the Marianites through the yellow fever and Civil War days, zealous young American and Irish women joined the Congregation.

At New Orleans the blockade of Lake Pontchartrain was kept up long after the city was taken, not to prevent access to the port, but to capture the illicit traders that cleared it.[21] As late as 1864 mention is made of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart having to come "through the Federal blockade" to take care of the Annunciation School, situated a mile below the Academy of the Holy Angels.[22]

By 1870 the annual commencement was news for the Catholic weekly paper, the **Morning Star.** The '70's and the '80's of the nineteenth century, reconstruction years in the south, were unprofitable. "Planters were bankrupt and allowances had to be made in accordance with the slender fortunes of the Louisiana people,"[23] writes the Academy's historian.

In proportion to the resources in the vicinity of the Academy, it was no small achievement on the part of the Marianites to have increased the enrollment of the Academy to 70 pupils by 1875. Undoubtedly, the new building must have formed a sharp contrast to the little frame building in which the Sisters had formerly taught. Noted for its simplicity of design, despite its erection under the Victorian Age, this building forms the main part of the convent group facing Saint Claude Avenue, today a splendid four-car drive, which is the principal thoroughfare of this section of New Orleans. The Rampart Street facade and the delicate frieze work in the spacious parlors of the Academy are evidences of good taste in an era when gaudiness and ornate decoration prevailed in architecture.[24]

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[19] "The Southern People During Reconstruction," **Atlantic Monthly** XLLLVII (September, 1901).
[20] **Chronicles, Marianite** Sisters of Holy Cross, New Orleans, p. 16.
[21] Emory Quinter Hawk, **Economic History of the South,** p. 418.
[22] Roger Baudier, (editor) Annunciation Church Parish **Centennial Booklet,** p. 31.
[23] **Chronicles, Marianite** Sisters of Holy Cross, New Orleans.

The Sisters who formed the faculty of the Academy in those days looked out on not a four-car drive but railroad tracks and aged locomotives chugging up and down **Bons-Enfants** Street (Saint Claude); they witnessed the laying of the first street pavement of square granite block, the building of the wharves along the Mississippi, the introduction of telegraphic connections of the City with the outside world. Two railways only united the City with the rest of the nation in contrast with the twenty-two rail roads in 1947; homes were made of home-made brick in contrast to those of imported granite built in the previous decades. Also, a new social attitude was noticeable among the students. The "Creole"[25] and the American sat side by side for instruction.[26] In the Orphanage of the Immaculate Conception the Sisters taught the orphan girls all kinds of useful work, and admitted them to the classroom for the rudiments of an education. Here was true democracy.

When His Grace, Most Reverend Napoleon J. Perche, in 1880, requested the Sisters to open a day school to meet the insistent demand for higher education on the part of the daughters of downtown New Orleanians, the Sisters graciously acceding to His Grace's request procured additionad ground in the square on which the Academy and convent still stand.

In the year 1885, in which the Constitutions of the Congregation came back from Rome finally approved, a notable structure, the Chapel of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, with a seating capacity of five hundred, was erected on the campus. With the building of the new chapel, the little white structure which had served for that purpose was moved to the rear of the Sisters' house, the Orphanage, and an adjoining kitchen built. These were demolished to give way to the more spacious and modern home for the faculty, St. Joseph's Hall, in 1936, built during Mother Mary Xavier's administration.

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[24] **Chronicles**, Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, (Unpublished manuscript of Catherine B. Dillon).
[25] Anyone born of French or Spanish parentage in the state of Louisiana is considered a "Creole".
[26] George W. Cable, "The Great South Gate," **Century**, **IV**, (April-November 1883) 221.

Commencement exercises were held each year in the large study hall used by the boarders until 1923, when, during Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans' administration a combined auditorium and gymnasium was erected.

In 1885 rows of sycamore trees were planted, but it was not until the turn of the twentieth century that the campus received the attention that has made it an inspiration to the students. Oleander trees were planted in the early years of the 1930's. In 1915 the shrine of Our Lady of Grace was erected; in 1934 those of Our Lady of Lourdes and the Sacred Heart. Small devotional shrines, one to Our Lady, Help of Christians, a favorite with the Freshmen, and another to Saint Joseph, grace the corners of the high wall in front of the Academy on North Rampart street.

As early as the year 1863, mention is found in the chronicles of the New Orleans Provincial House that "the Sisters of the mission houses returned to the Provincial House to spend their vacation in improving themselves scholastically."[27] Although many priest professors had been brought to lecture at Holy Angels through the years with a view to fashioning the Sisters for their great task of teaching, no recognition had been given by the State Department to the Normal School that had been functioning. In 1916[28] the State Department of Education at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, empowered the Academy of the Holy Angels, in its "College Department" operated exclusively for its own faculty of Sisters, to confer the Bachelor of Arts degree.[29] However, the Academy was not equipped to exercise this privilege. During the years the normal school was not functioning, the Sisters attended Loyola University to work for normal credits and degrees. 1922 marked the first degrees received from the Loyola Summer School of Arts and Sciences.[30]

The triumph of the years came in 1825 when the Academy was approved by the State Department of Education, which indicated that the Academy at this date had attained all state requirements in faculty and equipment.[31] Holy Angels had acquired recognition in the educational world. The number of graduates, which up to this date had been less than ten, began to grow, and the enrollment likewise:

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[27] **Supra,** p. 76.

[28] Mother Mary of St. James' Administration.

[29] **Chronicles,** Marianites, New Orleans, indicate the first degrees granted under this privilege were in 1942.

[30] **Chronicles,** Marianites, New Orleans, p. 43.

[31] Letter of Certification dated May 5, 1925 from Mr. Trudeau, Director of Certification, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Graduates

1930—19
1936—32
1940—61
1941—50
1942—51
1943—50
1946—72
1947—86

Enrollment

1905—116
1916—120
1925—235
1935—388
1943—400
1944—456
1945—406
1946—405
1947—440

An impetus was given to the growth of the student body by Sister Mary Xavier (Haggerty), Local Superior under Mother Mary Liguori's administration. As Principal of the Academy, Sister Mary Xavier promoted the organization of the Holy Angels' Circle of Saint Margaret's Daughters' Scholarship Fund in 1928 for deserving pupils of Parochial schools. The first President of this Circle was Miss Laura Discon.

By 1928[32] the "Holy Cross Normal" was functioning for the first time with a two-year Normal Course, but was later changed, in 1938, not only in name but also in the type of course offered. Under the title of "The College Department of the Academy of the Holy Angels" this has been operating ten years with courses on the four-year college level and both winter and summer extension courses. In this way, a corps of teachers equipped for the task is ever "in the making," while many have already gone into the field with their Bachelor of Arts degree, gaining thereby from the State Department of Education the necessary certification. In Chapter Four, which gives the life-story of the Marianites, teacher-training is more adequately discussed.

The studentbody kept pace with the Academy's growing prestige. Its fortieth milestone saw a matriculation of seven times its original number. Despite the depression of 1934-1935 in economic circles, the eighty-fifth milestone, the enrollment surpassed all expectations, numbering 388, or twenty times the original attendance. 1943's figure of 400 rounded this out to twenty-five times the original number in attendance. The matriculation of these years included both primary, and high-school grade children. For the past four years Holy Angels Academy has withdrawn all its primary grades. Entrance begins at the intermediate level, or the Fifth grade. Considering the loss in enrollment of four grades, the attendance has kept in excess of 400, the 1947-1948 session totalling 440, or twenty-seven times the Academy's' pioneer enrollment. This student body is drawn not only from the Southern states of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, and Louisiana, but also from Central and South America and the Republic of Panama.

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[32] Mother Mary Ligouri (Mazerat's) Administration.

From the first efforts with the Industrial School in 1851, to the request of Archbishop Odin, in 1881, the school was almost exclusively resident. Through the years changes have been made to adapt the buildings to the growing student body. Many still remember when the second floor of the Academy was the Sisters' residential quarters; the present chemistry laboratory, the Community's living room; and what now serves the Freshmen and Sophomore classes on the first floor once served as the Boarders' dining room! Alumnae returning for Homecoming Days love to recall and to point out the places where their tables were. There are not a few among the Sisters who recall the time when the present Principal's office served as the favorite shrine in the Academy—the little Oratory of the Sacred Heart, to which was attached an indulgence for every visit by His Excellency, Most Reverend Francis X. Leray. In this little Oratory the sodality of Our Lady gathered weekly to recite the Office of the Blessed Virgin.

There are still others among the Alumnae who have since become members of the Congregation who recall lovingly the old "Art Room" which now serves the Speech Class as a classroom. But the heart pang of all the years came to the Sisters when "the minims" had to be excluded from the Halls of Holy Angels and sent to a nearby Parochial school conducted by the Marianites—Saint Cecilia's.

In the opening of the 1947-48 session, the Grade children were removed from the High-school Department and placed in the building, across from the Academy on Saint Claude Avenue, which was bought in the summer of 1947. Contacts still remain; especially when the ranks assemble in the Academy grounds in the morning and file into the chapel for their visit to the Blessed Sacrament and their morning prayers.

Through all these years, there have been teachers whose names and pedagogic qualities were cited in Chapter Four: Mother Mary of the Five Wounds, the pioneer educator; Mother Mary of St. Modestus (Clark), Mother Mary of St. Cesaria (McDonnell), Mother Mary of St. Margaret (Haggerty), Mother Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan). Sister Mary of St. Bathilde and Sister Mary of St. Antonine may be cited for the excellent standards they maintained in the Music Department. Sister Mary of St. Bathilde (Louise Eugenie Plassan) having the distinction of being the first Musical instructor among the Marianites in Louisiana.

Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty) is distinguished in the Music and Dramatic departments.

No account of the growth of the Academy can be complete without attributing the expansion of the past twenty years as part of the life-work of Mother Mary Xavier. As Principal 1927-1932, and President of the Academy 1932-1948, Mother guided the school through transitions of twenty years, quadrupling the attendance in that time.

The various generations of Holy Angels girls will recall their personal friends among the members of the Marianite faculty of their years at the Academy. Some of these have gone to their eternal reward. In a history of this type it is impossible to mention the scores of religious who contributed to the accomplishment of the whole. Through the 97 years of the Academy's existence, the procession of girls grows both in strength and prestige: the Holy Angels' girl, the Holy Angels' student, the Holy Angels' alumna, the Holy Angels' woman.

Though the program of the first school was drawn along industrial lines, the bare rudiments of an education being included, with additional training in sewing that the students of those days might gain the means of a livelihood, after the formation of the Orphanage of the Immaculate Conception in 1855, the Academy afforded opportunities for those who came under the Marianites' instruction to gain an academic course. The practical side of life was not overlooked, for the instruction in plain sewing continued to be offered. Religion was a required subject for all Catholic pupils.

An early estimate of the esteem the public held for the training at Holy Angels appears in the **Catholic Propagator** of 1860:

> The distribution of premiums at the Marianites' Academy took place Thursday, July 31. A numerous audience of ladies and gentlemen testified by their presence the esteem they bear the establishment. The young ladies played perfectly the different parts assigned them in the two pretty dramas selected for the occasion and in living tableaux representing the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary surrounded by angels. An admirable effect was produced upon the assembly.

The first mention of the customary annual distribution of premiums, known today as commencement exercises, at Holy Angels Academy is noted in the **Chronicles** of 1858-1859. In the **Morning Star** of August 1, 1891, commemorating the Golden Jubilee celebration of that date, the editor remarks:

Previous to the building of Holy Angels Academy in 1862, a boarding and day school for young ladies had been conducted by the Sisters. It met with generous patronage during these **antebellum** days.

An account of an early graduation from the **Morning Star** of 1869 proves the progress made at the Academy. It was an account of the Annual Exhibition July 28, 1869:

> The annual examination of this institution terminated on the twenty-fourth instant. All the branches taught in the Academy formed the subjects of examination. The pupils acquitted themselves to the entire satisfaction of the examiners, as the number of premiums distributed on the 28th fully testify. The manner in which the young ladies sustained their various parts at the exhibition proves the extraordinary care bestowed upon their intellectual and aesthetic education, and the genuine talent and marked proficiency of the pupils.
>
> At 10 o'clock in the morning on the 28th, a numerous and distinguished assemblage, consisting of the parents and friends of the pupils and several of the Reverend Clergy of the City, met in the study hall of the Academy. The exercises were opened with a grand march. The prologue was spoken by Miss K. Fader in a graceful and emphatic manner.
>
> The drama selected for representation was from the world-renowned **Fabiola** of Cardinal Wiseman, prepared expressly for the occasion. The enunciation was clear; the gestures, appropriate and graceful; the costumes, splendid; and the scenery suited to the occasion.
>
> The humorous and instructive drama, **La Femme du Monde,** closed the programme. During the performance, vocal and instrumental pieces were interspersed, giving an opportunity to many of the pupils to display their proficiency in that beautiful art.
>
> After the distribution of premiums, Reverend Father Jeremiah Moynihan addressed the audience and the young ladies in his usual happy and eloquent strain. His remarks were very appropriate and well calculated to make an impression on his fair auditors. Reverend Father Foltier, Pastor of St. Vincent's Church, delivered an eloquent address in French to the parents of the children. These addresses terminated the exercises of th Academy.

Although the curriculum was academic in trend, and many of the old girls consider that it was of the twentieth-century college level, the Academy offered opportunities for many of the students to equip themselves for office work. Commercial and academic divisions began to take sharper lines of cleavage in the 1917-1918 World War I period when phonography ceased to be looked down upon and classified as "a fine art" and women began to release men in the offices for duty over seas in the American Expeditionary forces.

The only epidemic in the first twenty-five years of the twentieth century equal in importance to those numerous fever epidemics of the nineteenth century[33] was that of Influenza the summer and fall of 1918. The Government prohibited the opening of the schools. Even the churches were closed to prevent the spread of this mysterious plague which struck far and wide, even in the most remote corners of the world. Not being retarded by natural calamities, the Academy may well consider its first half of the twentieth century "its growing years."

A happy blending of the older values with the lively spirit of modern youth was becoming evident even to the most casual observer at the Academy. The curriculum, built primarily for the whole girl with a view to her physical, intellectual, social, and religious needs, fostered proper attitudes and ideals, a well-balanced character, based on the highest principles of conduct; a deep appreciation of the finer things of life, forming a solid, spiritual and aesthetic background.

By 1935, the Scholarship Fund of the St. Margaret's Daughters (Holy Angels' Circle) had swelled to the sum of $10,000. The Holy Angels Cooperative Club carries this work forward, granting scholarships annually. One of the early requirements for the scholarship (since waived) was that the pupil possess musical talent and a willingness to become a member of the Academy band. In 1934 Holy Angels' Band was one of the best in New Orleans.[34] Composed of fifty-two members, under the direction of Professor F. Geoffray, this band entered the Annual Contest in 1934, held by Werlein's Music Store, and captured the first prize with a Grade B. rating.

Ground was broken in 1935, and in 1936 the Sisters' new faculty residence, Saint Joseph's Hall, was erected.

Training for the better use of leisure time took the shape of a successful Glee Club in 1934 directed by Miss Eileen McKinnon, graduate of Loyola University School of Music; while musical instruction was given by Mrs. Marechal of the New Orleans Conservatory of Music. Since the very earliest days of the school's existence, a member of the Community has also directed instruction in instrumental and vocal music. Sister Mary of St. Bartholomew (Durand) replaced Professor Goeffray in the capacity of Band director for a few years in the 1930's. One of the Marianite Sisters continues the instrumental and vocal instruction. while Reverend Robert J. Stahl, S.M., of Notre Dame Seminary, prepares the students for the year's outstanding programs.

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[33] Yellow fever epidemics referred to were those of 1853, 1866, 1867, 1870, 1877, 1891, 1897, 1905.

[34] Holy Angels' Band won the $100 prize in 1932's contest.

Until 1940 Dramatic Art training was under the able direction of Miss Olivia H. Lyne, an associate worker with Miss Lily C. Whitaker, whose College of Oratory was well known and appreciated in New Orleans; subsequently. Mr. Edward Dillon has directed the students along dramatic lines. Mrs. Clare Cassidy Evans, an alumna of Holy Cross, conducts very successfully the Dancing Department, and designs the costumes for the annual pageants. Religious instruction of the Senior class is ably cared for by the Franciscan chaplain, who likewise visits the various classes at different periods each week, supplementing the classroom instruction in religion.

Athletics has taken the place of the old-fashioned calisthenics under the form of Physical Education directed by Miss Helen McLaughlin (1927-1943,) and, subsequently, by the teachers themselves, as the Louisiana State Board of Education required training along Physical Educational lines for teacher certification within the last two decades. The Academy won the largest number of awards presented by the **Times-Picayune** at its track meet of 1932-'33. Other athletic trophies which the school proudly displays are the Spalding trophy, Girls Indoor Champions, Catholic School Athletic League, 1925, the League's trophy for Baseball, 1926. Of recent years, the League trophies were won by the following teams:

Senior Volleyball	1945-1946	
Junior Volleyball	1946-1947	(Junior Varsity)
Basketball	1946-1947	(Junior Varsity)
Volleyball	1944-1945	(Junior Varsity)
Indoor Championship	1945-1946	(Senior Varsity)
Indoor Championship	1944-1945	(Senior Varsity)
Volleyball	1945-1946	(Junior Varsity)
Basketball	-	(Loyola Award)
Volleyball	1944-1945	(Senior Varsity)
Basketball	1945-1946	(Junior Varsity)
Volleyball	1947-1948	(Senior Varsity)
Volleyball	1947-1948	(Junior Varsity)

Outstanding Marianite athletic directors of the years when these teams were brought to victory were Sister Mary of St. Edmund (Schexnaildre) and Sister Mary of St. John the Evangelist (Sutherland), the former having guided the teams through 1946; the latter, having gained the 1947-1948 honors for her teams.

Side by side with athletic trophies are additional Band trophies, "The Louisiana School Music Contest and Festival Association" by Ben Beekman for Class B. rating; the Junior Rating Award given by the Federation of Music Clubs, 1942.

In the line of creative writing, three awards are displayed, one won by Fara Impastato. This International Creative Writing Award (1937 plaque) was given by the International Business Machines Corporation. Miss Impastato also received a gold wrist watch for herself and the school received an electric typewriter. Miss Impastato's essay merited first-place in a nationwide competition. Mary Madden, '48, received the second and third trophies for creative writing; one, for her essay on Edison, awarded by the Electrical Association, and another, from the Veterans of Foreign Wars for her essay on "The Home—the Cradle of Democracy."

In aiming to gain the prestige of recognized scholarship, Holy Angels has not omitted an important feature of any Academy—traditions. Rapid scholastic development is closely allied to firm social and academic customs. Not only does the school term always begin with the Mass of the Holy Ghost to invoke Divine blessings upon the year's' work, but every Monday morning Mass is offered in honor of the Holy Spirit, at which, alternately, either the upperclassmen (Sophomores through Seniors) or the underclassmen (Fifth-grade level through the Freshmen level) assist for the purpose of drawing God's blessings upon the week's work.

The beautiful old custom of giving food to the needy at Thanksgiving and at Christmas, wholeheartedly carried out by the students during the 1930's continues through the 1940's. Generous students fill these baskets with fruits, vegetables, cereals and tempting holiday dainties, providing many delicious dinners. These are delivered by the girls themselves, affording them the opportunity to promote holiday joy and cheer.

The Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes has become one of the favorite haunts of Our Lady's devout clients at their free intervals. Each morning during the month of May, sodalists, chanting hymns, march in procession to the shrine of Our Lady of Grace where the classes alternate in the crowning of the statue daily with fresh flowers, as they recite the beads and the Litany of Our Lady.

At the close of this ceremony at the shrine, the procession is again formed and wends its way to the Chapel where Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given. Mary Impastato of the class of 1941, in the **Marianite** annual of that year, captured the schoolgirl's view of these May devotions at A. H. A.

> Morning . . . and on the quiet air are young voices lifted in song to our Blessed Mother. The girls, who are fortunate to be crowners for a day, lay their gay bouquet at Our Lady's feet. After her own Litany is recited, the students file into the Chapel marching to the singing of one of God's Mother's favorite hymns, the one sung at Lourdes. Benediction always seems beautiful to me; but somehow, Benediction in May has a special significance. Perhaps, because of the sunshine and flowers, the spring that is evident everywhere. God's coming out of the Tabernacle is like the bursting of a white bud through the snow. There is something breathless about Benediction and singing Mary's hymns that make May devotions at A. H. A. the almost completely satisfying thing they are.

Through the Sodality Council and its eight committees, students embrace responsibilities that develop their potentialities for organization. Reverend Louis Mulry, S.J., visited Holy Angels October 17, 1928, and organized the sodality along the lines recommended by Reverend Daniel Lord, S.J. The Sodality had the honor of having Reverend Louis Mulry, S.J. present at its bi-weekly meetings.

In Lafayette, Louisiana the Students Spiritual Council held its meeting March 6, 7, 8, 1932. Reverend Father Lord, S.J. opened the convention with prayers and religious hymns. After preliminaries, the convention proceeded along the line of informal discussions. Sodalists from Holy Angels spoke on "Spiritual Leadership," "Devotion to the Blessed Sacrament," "The Value of Catholic Literature," "Devotion to Mary," and "The Need of Catholic Libraries." At the close of the last topic, the sodalists were urged to do their best to obtain and to maintain Catholic libraries. The result of this convention was far-reaching. Poor boxes were placed in the halls of the Academy, and from the contributions made, provisions were purchased and distributed to the poor. An old clothes drive was inaugurated, and the issue was very gratifying. These good works grew with rapidity. The members of the Catholic Literature Committee visited the hospitals and the Little Sisters of the Poor to distribute Catholic Literaure. Some gathered old papers, sold them, and with the returns purchased Catholic literature for their poor people.

Having one hundred per cent membership in the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, a Pontifical Society with the aim of mission education, Holy Angels' Crusaders have competed in all C.S.M.C. Oratorical and Apologetic contests since their incipiency in New Orleans, May, 1939. Louise Hecker appeared in the 1939 contest finals. Outstanding Holy Angels contestants have been Geraldine Clark, who won the Most Reverend Archbishop Joseph F. Rummel's' Plaque in 1940. This plaque moves each year to the winning school, and should one school win it three successive years, the plaque remains as the permanent possession of that school. Constance Cuccia, Mary Lou Schultis, Norma Giron, Dorothy Rigaud, Elaine Frey, Patricia Ann McCusker and Mary Madden. All of these who won second place came out in the "finals' and were invested with the Paladin Jewel. This honor, than which there is none higher that Crusade can offer its members, was also conferred upon Kathryn Rauch,[35] the first President of the New Orleans C.S.M.C. Union.

An annual newspaper publication, begun in 1938 with the school organ, **The Marianite,** under the direction of Sister Mary Loyola (Haggerty) and Sister Mary of St. Joseph (Gillen), provides an incentive for the student interested in writing. And for those inclined toward radio activity, there is the bi-weekly broadcast of the Academy's current "highlights" over the local radio station, W.N.O.E., with an occasional appearance on the "American School of the Air," Loyola University W.W.L.'s programs, under the direction of Doctor Alfred J. Bonomo.

To encourage leadership and initiative, the pupils are urged to participate in all extra-curricular activities. Holy Angels' girls have led discussions at the Dixie Sodality Conventions, notably those of 1928, 1941, 1942; as well as the Catholic Press Conventions held for student publications. Geraldine Clark spoke on "Anthologies of High-school Students" at the 1940 New Orleans Convention. In the never-to-be-forgotten days of October 17-20, 1938, which marked the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress, the entire student body sang the Mass in unison with the school children of the city and furnished its share of band music for the Youth Day. Holy Angels' students had a special cause for pride in singing the National Congress Hymn as its words were composed by one of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, Sister Mary of St. Norbert (O'Bryan.)

Holy Angels' May queen holds her court in the open air theater on the third Sunday of May. The May queen is chosen from the Senior class as the person who approaches most nearly the ideal of Catholic Maidenhood. This girl is usually the Prefect of the Sodality.

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[35] Ex Class, 1938.

The school has on several occasions sponsored a float in the Nor Parade, the children's Carnival Parade in which the A.H.A. Band always participated, also in the Spring Fiesta of 1938. Second only to **Mardi Gras** as a New Orleans attraction to tourists is the Spring Fiesta, but unlike **Mardi Gras**, a day of mirth and misrule, the Spring Fiesta extends over a week in which different phases of the cultural charm of New Orleans and its environs are brought to the attention of visitors and residents alike. Held in the early spring, when New Orleans is ablaze with color of flowers and bright sunshiny days, the Fiesta proves most attractive to guests. Visitors see in contrast the old and new of "the most interesting city in America."[36] Recognition was won by Holy Angels' float, "O Blessed Day" in the Spring Fiesta of 1938, and one of its maids was appointed to be present at the Ball that night.

As the school auditorium is equipped with sound and motion-picture facilities, bi-weekly entertainment is furnished and enjoyed immensely by the students. Each year when the Louisiana State Board of Movie Reviewers convene the day after Thanksgiving at the Hotel Louisiana girls from the Academy appear among the city's student reviewers. Outstanding among the Academy's past reviewers were: 1939, Fara Impastato, who won recognition from this Board for her splendid reviews of **The Buccaneer** and **Romeo and Juliet** in 1939; Constance Cuccia in 1940; Mary Lou Schultis in 1941, reviewing "A Yank in the R.A.F."; Rosemary Saucier in 1942 reviewing "Wake Island—Fourteen Days America Can Never Forget."; 1943, a group of students held a panel discussion, reviewing "Wilson." In the years 1944 through 1946 the groups discussed informally several pictures, and as Sound in the motion picture celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 1946, the discussion centered upon sound effects. Josie Borello, Mae Spurway, Mary Francis Disher, June Ann Thompson formed 1946's discussion group.

Recognition is due the school library, "the pulse of the school," where Sister Mary of St. Thomas (Hinckley), a trained librarian is in constant attendance. Holy Angels' library contains approximately 8,000 volumes. Its excellent reference and magazine sections are augmented by a slendid collection of French and Spanish classics. Regular classes in Library science on the High-School level are held for the Freshman classes. These lessons enhance the value of the library for the students through their upper class work.

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[36] Rex Laney, (editor) **Do You Know Louisiana?** p. 279.

The Catholic High-School Library Association, formed in 1933 during a meeting of the various librarians from Catholic schools of New Orleans, had as one of its outgrowths the launching of the only Catholic Book Week ever publicly celebrated in New Orleans (April, 1938.) It was in Holy Angels' auditorium that the association was formed; hence, Holy Angels felt it should play a prominent part in this movement. The Academy held the chairmanship and handled all of the secretarial work, arranging exhibits in D. H. Holmes' windows as well as the Tip Top Inn of the Roosevelt Hotel for the Youth Conference which replaced the Dixie Sodality convention that year.

Interesting lectures by prominent speakers have filled the school calendar with bright, intellectual moments. Not only have the students enjoyed annually several lectures from visiting missionaries, but also they enjoyed presentations from noted dramatic artists.

Along religious lines, the Convert League of the Catholic Daughters of America since 1940 have held days of recollection at the Academy for the purpose of introducing the Catholic religion to non-Catholics or for continuing the instruction of converts. Miss Margaret Cox directs the work of this Convert League.

Academy students avail themselves of the training in Catechetics offered in the Friday evening classes of the Archdiocesan Normal School of Christian Doctrine conducted at Holy Angels. The first graduation exercises of this Normal School of Christian Doctrine were held June 7, 1942.

True to the apostolic zeal characteristic of their Marianite teachers, the students placed their patriotic activities on a spiritual foundation, prayer and the reception of the Sacraments for those engaged in World War II, and to obtain a just and lasting peace. An hour of adoration was offered every Sunday evening for this purpose.

The courses in Mathematics, Civics, American History, First Aid and Home Nursing were intensified as demands were made by the State Department Syllabus of requirements. A special emphasis was placed upon the teaching of Physical Geography. A Physical Fitness Program geared to war requirements was reflected in the induction of the Academy's' Junior-Senior Victory Corps May 7, 1943. A military tone was given this ceremony by the attendance of women auxiliaries, the WAAC's and the WAVES. Almyr Stolz's winning of the plaque offered by the Department of Fats Conservation through her essay on "Fats Will Win the War" was one of the year's memorable items showing student intellectual participation in emergency activities. One of the members of the Civilian Defense Corps presented this plaque to Miss Stolz January 8, 1943, remarking that the contestant from Holy Angels had competed with those from 124 of the city's schools.

Symbolic of the high cultural opportunities provided for the students are two tributes of love and gratitude planned and executed by Mother Mary Xavier in honor of two of New Orleans' beloved citizens: The first, entitled, "An Evening with Doctor James T. Nix" (of Nix Clinic fame) was presented in 1927. His Grace, the late Archbishop William J. Shaw, presided, while members of the Medical circle acted as ushers. Linked with this performance in the memories of many at the Academy was the December 3, 1942 "An Evening with Reverend James O'Brien, S.J." program. This delicate and exquisite interpretation of Reverend Father O'Brien's poetry, published in his book, **Sagart Singing,** on the occasion of his Golden Jubilee, revealed the dramatic ability of a number of the students, and merited the high praise its admirable direction warranted.

Old and modern programs testify to the dramatic presentation of religious themes as an integral part of the Oral English training. As early as 1869, **Fabiola,** by Cardinal Wiseman, was presented; 1871, **The Martyrdom** of St. Cecilia; 1872, **Athalia,** a drama taken from the Scriptures; **Jeanne D'Arc;** 1876, **The Embassy of the Angels;** 1914, **Pontia, Daughter of Pilate,** by Reverend Albany Christie, S.J.

This beautiful old custom flowered throughout the last sixteen years into the Academy's well-known and highly-appreciated annual presentation of charming, spiritual pageants.

1928 The Courtship of Summer and Winter, directed by Miss Carmel Discon;
1929 The Contested Crown (Contest of the Seasons)
1930 The Year's Festivities
1931 Old New Orleans
1932 Midsummer Night's Dream
1933 The Land of Make Believe
1934 Lingering Memories
1935 The Mystery of Life
1936 Canticle of Love, by Rev. James A. Greeley, S.J.
1937 Lourdes
1938 Mystery of Faith
1939 Souvenirs
1940 The Shepherd of His Flock, by Rev. Daniel Lord, S.J.
1941 Forward with Christ and His Cross
1942 Because By Thy Holy Cross
1943 The Third Day, by Rev. Francis X. Talbot, S.J.
1944 Bethlehem, by Rev. Francis X. Talbot, S.J.

These two pageants were taken from Father Talbot's Book, **Shining in Darkness**

1945 Song of Tekakwitha, from the poem by Rev. Holland, S.J.
1946 Fatima—A Torch to the World
1947 Annie Laurie (Senior Class Play)
1948 A Canticle of Praise (Centennial Pageant)

With the solid background of general culture gleaned in a Catholic atmosphere, Holy Angels' girls develop integrated personalities, self-directive, self-reliant, well-poised in their contacts with others. They are conscious of the problems which concern the social groups of which they form a part.

As religious teachers, the Marianites have given their students a philosophy capable of carrying them through life. In examining the words and actions of the best-known and revered Marianites who formed the faculty of Holy Angels and of the Superiors who moulded the younger religious according to a solid system of thought, there is evidence of a definite philosophy at work. Mother Mary Seven Dolors, the First Superior General, in a letter to the instructors reminds them: "However it may appear, men esteem only those religious . . . who have the spirit of their holy state."[37] Again Mother says: "Souls that are valiant and well disciplined against the vanities of the age do not fail to triumph through piety and faith."[38]

It was also Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors' conviction that Sisters in the educational field had reason neither to be over-confident nor discouraged.[39] Mother wrote:

> "You must not rely on yourself to succeed with the children . . . You do well to fear the responsibility of your class; but put all your confidence in God and do not be dejected, or you would certainly displease the good God. Continue to implore the help of our august patroness, and you will obtain it.[40]

Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors tells her Sisters if they are to achieve success they must:

> "Love your pupils in God . . . Your charge is very great, I realize; the good God intends to help you to fulfill it, and to supply all that you lack if you rely only on Him, if you pray well, if you distrust yourself without ever becoming discouraged.[41]

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[37] **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors,** Letter 1, page 67.

[38] **Ibid.,** Letter 6, p. 69.

[39] "The Educational Philosophy of the Sisters of Holy Cross," Essay by Betty Jane Carr, **Chimes,** p. 132 Commencement issue, 1943. St. Mary's College, Holy Cross, Indiana.

[40] **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors,** Letter 18, p. 74.

[41] **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors,** Letter 9, p. 70.

Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors founded her system of philosophy for her Sisters upon faith, on confidence in God, on selflessness, on love:[42] To yet another one of the teachers she wrote:

> Do not be discouraged at not being able to obtain silence and all that you wish from your pupils; but continue to pray and to do your best. The good God sees your good will; He will do the rest. When one does all that she can and should do, it is then for God to give success or to refuse it according to His divine will.[43]

Mother's faith convinced her that when teachers wish to do God's will, He will provide what is needed. They must have no fear, for Christ would be with them:

> If you sacrifice yourself to accomplish the will of the good God, you will have success with your pupils. Do not seek yourself in anything. It must cost us something to please our divine crucified Spouse.[44]

They are to let God work through them and in them, and therefore they must die to themselves: "Practice self-renouncement in order to give pleasure to others . . . to bear kindly with different characters."[45] Again, Mother stressed the disciplining of themselves, and remarked that then the results would be obvious among the children. She explained: "Good example, modesty, virtue, portrayed without one's knowing it in the lines of the face; religious gravity, a dignified demeanor, the tone of the voice, all this is impressed in the soul of the child."[46]

To impress the Sisters more forcibly Mother wrote again:

> When we do not seek our own personal interests, we are happy to place our qualities, our talents, our strength, our health, our prayers, our virtues even, at the service of all.[47]

It was such direction that established the foundation of the educational philosophy of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross.

With their own gifted minds, the various Marianites who have governed the local community have unconsciously laid down their own principles of Catholic education, contributing to this system of educational philosophy. Mother Mary of St. Modestus might be taken as an example:

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[42] Betty Jane Carr, "The Educational Philosophy of the Sisters of Holy Cross," Chimes, Commencement Issue, 1943, p. 133.

[43] **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors**, Letter 16, p. 74.

[44] **Ibid.**, Letter 19, p. 74.

[45] **Ibid.**

[46] **The Spirit of Mother Mary of the Seven Doolors**, Letter 10, p. 71.

[47] **Chimes**, Commencement Issue, 1943, p. 133 (St. Mary's College, Holy Cross, Indiana).

> "Oh, with what care should not the teacher approach her task; when we remember that we are training immortal souls, fashioned to the image and likeness of God, how holy, how high, how sacred is our vocation.[48]

Mother Mary of St. Modestus gave the best of her mental endowments to fit the Holy Angels girls of her day to take their part in the intellectual and social life of the nation. It will be recalled that at her death it was written[49] "that she had been such a high ideal to her pupils that after a lapse of years these pupils came together for her funeral, bearing violets which they laid upon her heart."

Mother Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona (Haggerty) impressed her students with the belief that they might lead others to God through knowledge and the development of whatever talents the good God had bestowed upon them, whether it were music or art. Her remarkable grasp of English grammar and literature gave her a more than ordinary influence in moulding teachers for this field; nevertheless, it might as truly be said that her stimulus was one of inspiration, encouragement, in developing the best not only in the members of her community but also her students.

Mother Mary of St. Cesaria (McDonnel), docile to the principles communicated by Mother Mary of St. Margaret, her former teacher, believed in the development not only of the attending pupils but also of the old graduates of the Academy, the alumnae members, along social and charitable lines. It was for this purpose she developed and organized the Holy Cross Alumnae in 1907.

Mother Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan) built on this foundation according to the intellectual needs of her own generation, her emphasis being upon the development of the whole stature of the student—whether she prayed or played, studied or entertained, Mother Mary of St. Raphael stressed that the true Academy girl brought to the affair at hand the best she had within her, Contemporary teachers remark, "Mother Raphael made women out of her girls." What finer culmination of a Catholic education could be reached?

Mother Mary of St. James (Dooley) by nature quiet and gentle, communicated this spirit to those under her care. The inner life, she felt, was the true life of the student, and if it were progressing, then all would go well with the intellectual life. She advocated constant application to study in order to achieve their own particular goals. It was Mother Mary of St. James who considered the intellectual development of the Sisters of such paramount importance that in order to encourage them in seeking higher educational degrees she, herself, attended Loyola University sessions with them, thus giving the example.

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[48] Supra, p. 111.
[49] Supra. p. 112.

This educational philosophy of Holy Angels' past is continued in the present. There is evidence at the Academy in the leadership and impetus given the students by Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty) and her corps of teachers, although each one contributes to the whole, one believing as Mother Mary Xavier does, "The good teacher is tested not by the brilliant pupil but by the dull ones," and yet another, following definitely another phase of the philosophy handed down through the generations of Marianites "Love knowledge, and you will lavor with all your strength to acquire it—" (Mother Mary of St. Margaret's philosophy), each meeting the needs of her own class. Mother Mary Xavier develops the "whole girl", as did Mother Mary of St. Raphael, but she goes a step further by surrounding the student with channels of self-expression through the cultural and the aesthetic, the musical, the dramatic elements of education. Again, there is prevalent collateral development of the "whole personality" of the girl by the splendid athletic program of the school. This follows the trend of the twentieth century educational pattern. Each Marianite in her own little way has impressed her own educational philosophy, consciously or unconsciously, upon the students of her classes, for "everyone knows that teachers more than any other group impress young minds with their own philosaphy of life."[50] The fact that Holy Angels' students prove that they are capable in the various fields of endeavor in which they enter shows that they must have a solid system of thought supporting them. "The wisdom of the plan outlined in the Rule of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross lies in the breadth of principles which makes it flexible enough to fit the needs of any century."[51]

Rallying about the standard of the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross, **"In Cruce Salus"**, alumnae members of Holy Cross schools in Louisiana met in the Academy parlors December 14, 1907 to form for the first time the **Holy Cross Alumnae Association.** On another occasion His Grace, Most Reverend Hubert Blenk, Archbishop of New Orleans, addressed the group[52] and reminded them of what alumnae of **Holy Cross** were expected to accomplish; that they had gathered around their standard, "In Cruce Salus," than which there is none holier in Christendom, to plan and work for God's glory and sweet charity's sake. "His Grace stressed further that if they wished the Alumnae to live and to stand for something in the State, it must grow, and continue to grow always, by frequently coming together, by an interchange of thoughts and ideas, and by performing deeds corresponding to their lofty ideals. "Set your standard high. Do not be content with doing little. Extend your sphere of usefulness and work, so that wherever the name of Marianites of Holy Cross is known, alongside of it will stand the work of the Alumnae."[53]

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[50] Betty Jane Carr, op. cit., **Chimes**, p. 132 (1943).
[51] **Idem.**
[52] **Supra**, p. 112.

To this stirring incentive given by His Grace, Most Reverend Hubert Blenk, D.D., the leaders of the group responded, pledging fidelity and loyalty to Catholic education and to its great representative in the Archdiocese of New Orleans—their beloved Archbishop. The yearly Mass for the members of the Alumnae offered on Homecoming Day proves a touching reminder that the graduates of Holy Angels are united to each other, as well as the graduates of other schools under Holy Cross direction.

In the Alumnae records one reads of the link with the Academy's past history formed by the attendance of Miss Annie R. Taffe, of the Class of 1876, at the Homecoming Day festivities November 6, 1938. Miss Taaffe was at that time the oldest living graduate attending the Alumnae reunions. She was recognized officially by the Board of New Orleans as the second oldest teacher in Louisiana.[54] Gone for her were the days which she loved to recall—days when Holy Angels' girls were occupied in making flowers out of fish scales or wax; gone were the days when fireplaces were used for heating purposes, as a modern steam-heating system has been operative since 1917. And when Miss Taaffe dined with the Alumnae it was in the modern, well-equipped Cafeteria, of which there was no fore-runner in her school-days. In her walks about the grounds she noticed the volleyball, the basketball and the tennis courts where a well-rounded sports program is carried out, and noted, in the place of the old white frame building, which served as the cradle for the community, the modern St. Joseph's residence Hall and the cloistered walks joining it with the other four buildings that go to form the present Holy Cross unit. All these changes Miss Taffee noted in the present Academy from that of her school days (1872-1876); but as she remarked, "she bestowed upon today's Marianites of Holy Cross the same affection she held for her early teachers, as she considered them links with those of the past." She found in the present Marianite teachers the same spirit of the Sisters who had taught her in her youth.

To attempt to bring out the manner in which Holy Angels' Alumnae members have accomplished their pledge of fidelity and loyalty to Catholic education would be to court an impossibility; but the issue of **The St. Bernard Voice,** of Saturday, July 10, 1937, in its tribute to Miss Annie Taaffe, summed up what it considered noteworthy from this oldest Alumna's teaching life, reflected all that would be expected of one of Holy Angels' graduates:

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[53] **Morning Star**, March 8, 1908.

[54] **St. Bernard Voice, Arabi**, (St. Bernard Parish) Louisiana July 10, 1937, Editorial page.

> After completing 56 years of continuous service as a school teacher in St. Bernard, Miss Annie R. Taaffe went on the retired list a few days ago. She is officially recognized as the second-oldest school teacher in Louisiana, though in reality the oldest, but in computing length of service no credit is given for summer school teaching. If this work were added to that of regular scholastic terms she would have been first, by a considerable margin, in length of service.
>
> Miss Taaffe was truly wedded to her profession and found her reward in training the minds of her juvenile charges, not alone in the way of knowledge, but also in moral cleanliness, thus proving herself a potent factor in the elevation of the citizenship of the Parish and adjoining communities, whose youthful residents also came under her beneficient influence.
>
> Combining rare ability with energy and conscientious efforts to attain the greatest results, the record she achieved stamped her as the ideal teacher, who was an honor and an ornament to her profession. Her numerous former-pupils, scattered in various fields of human endeavor, bear witness to the noble attributes of mind and heart with which Miss Taaffe is endowed, and they are not unmindful of the fact that they owe their success, in a large measure, to the high principles and ideals which she inculcated in them in their school days.
>
> With Miss Taaffe the school was her workshop; there she stirred ambitions, stimulated ideals, forged the keys that opened the door to opportunity. With her the spirit of education was inborn, and her many years of zealous and effective service in behalf of St. Bernard's school children created an indebtedness which the citizens of this Parish can never pay, except in honor, esteem and admiration, and these they give in generous abundance.
>
> In congratulating Miss Taaffe upon her outstanding and most creditable record, and upon the great distinction she has so deservedly earned, may we not express the sincere hope that many more years of life may be spard to her, that she may see more of the fruition of her great and grand work.[55]

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[55] **St. Bernard Voice, Arabi,** (St. Bernard Parish) Louisiana, July 19, 1937.

Miss Annie R. Taaffe proved her devotedness to her Holy Cross teachers of the past by coming to live at the Academy the remaining of her declining years. There was comradeship for her, as there was at that time still residing at the Academy an old orphan, Mary Louise Wiltz, a contemporary of Miss Annie. Their deaths occurred a few months apart in the year 1942.

Successive generations of Alumnae have imbibed the spirit of these older members. Rightly might they be called "a rich heritage."

Perhaps, the greatest spiritual achievement of the Holy Cross Alumnae has been the number if religious vocations with which God has blessed its members.

SPIRITUAL SERVICE OF MARIANITE STUDENTS
HOLY ANGELS ACADEMY

Sister Mary of St. John	Cecile Budge
Sister Mary of St. Mathilde	Louise Escoffier
Sister Mary Liguori	M. Eulalie Mazerat
Sister Mary of St. Isabelle	Rosa Daigre
Sister Mary of St. Agnes	Thelma Seagrave
Sister Mary of St. Bernadette	Claire Birrcher
Sister Mary of St. Paschal	Marjorie Lump
Sister Mary of St. Leo	Amelda Cavell
Sister Mary of St. Francesca	Louise Petrowsky
Sister Mary Magdalen	Adele Poursine
Sister Mary of St. Louise	Marie Sanders
Sister Mary of St. Genevieve	Dolores Gitz
Sister Mary of St. Imelda	Theresa Voelker
Sister Mary Carmel	Dorothy Murphy
Sister Mary Lourdes	Helen Dorsey
Sister Mary of St. Andre	Corinne Mouton
Sister Mary of St. Martin	Novella Hecker
Sister Mary of St. Elizabeth	Mary Grace Lanning
Sister Mary of St. Clothilde	Lurline Broussard
Sister Mary of St. Germaine	Margie Buckingham
Sister Mary Rosario	Mary Leonardi
Sister Mary of St. Beatrice	Lovensia Schmidt
Sister Mary of St. Eymard	Martha McClellan
Sister Mary of St. Evangelist	June Sutherland
Sister Mary of St. Alberta	Florence Foley
Sister Mary of St. Bonaventure	Elaine Esteves
Sister Mary of St. Enda	Eileen Byrne
Sister Mary of St. Estelle	Riva Foucheaux

Sister Mary of St. Simeon	Evelyn Eason
Sister Mary Moreau	Frances McGuiness
Sister Mary of St. David	Mary Hecker
Sister Mary Cor Mariae	Zita Foley
Sister Mary of St. Antonine	Mary Elise Talbot
Sister Mary of St. Perpetua	Mary Theresa McGuiness
Sister Mary of St. Anastasia	Helen Biener
Sister Mary of St. Cyril	Elizabeth Laborie
Sister Mary of St. Cyprian	Helen Marie Byrne
Sister Mary of St. William	Mary Hewson
Sister Mary of St. Eleanor	Joyce Strehle
Sister Marie Therese	Marguerite Laborie

VOCATIONS TO OTHER RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Sister M. Benedicta, D.C.	Daisy Landry
Sister M. Augustine, S.S.J.	Cora Sutkamp
Sister M. Joseph, I.C.	Rita Voelker
Sister M. Mida, R.S.M.	Mida Coleman
Sister Lucia, M.S.S.E.	Fara Impastato
Sister M. Jane, O.P.	Phyllis Birrcher

CHAPTER NINE

AT THE NARROWS OF THE MISSISSIPPI

NINETY YEARS have passed away since the Marianite Sisters began their labors in this first country mission located at Plaquemine a few miles south of Baton Rouge, the last stronghold of the Missississippi Indians. The achievements of the years are convincing proofs of the bounty of God towards these Sisters. Faithfully did they labor amid the clouds and the storms of those early days to lay the foundation of an educational establishment which has proven not only a blessing to Plaquemine but also the pride of its citizens.

At the request of the Reverend Charles Chambost, the Marianites entered into a contract on May 21, 1857, to undertake educational work in the Parish. Little did they realize that this mission would be one consecrated by sorrow of the heart and of history. "Crowns of roses fade; crowns of thorns endure." Thus, Plaquemine was crowned with sorrow in the past; her crown of thorns was immortalized in the glory of Holy Cross.

Six Sisters arrived on September 1, 1857, to take over the Girls' school, and to form a part of St. John's College, which had been opened in 1853. At first, the Sisters were obliged to live in a small rented house—a one-story frame building of six rooms, which served as convent and school. It was located at the southeast corner of Court and Church streets, diagonally across from the present location of the convent.

In those early days sympathy and encouragement meant much, and Father Chambost's interest in the little community, struggling for a foothold, buoyed up the hopes of the pioneers, so that when they feared for the future they cast all their cares on God and that anchor held.

His zeal for the spiritual and temporal welfare of those under his care prompted the zealous and progressive pastor, Father Chambost, to erect a three-story college for boys. His spirit of faith was as aspiring as it was ardent. How poignant, then, must have been his grief when either by accident or otherwise, the college caught fire and was completely destroyed together with the church, February 5, 1858. Broken and crushed by disappointment and work, Father Chambost returned to his beloved France. During his later years, grateful and loving sympathy and prayers were not wanting to him from those who had learned early in their spiritual life the story of the time when the fate of their first permanent country mission hung in the balance.

From August to October, 1858, the Sisters and the parishioners of Plaquemine were indeed stricken. Their church was without a priest. Spiritually starved as were the Sisters, they did not abandon the mission so sorely tried. Encouraged by major Superiors, they continued to hope even as the solitary star on this gloomy night flickered out.

November 23, 1858, brought comfort and joy to these desolated Marianites. A new and zealous pastor, Reverend Francis C. Follot was appointed to the Catholic Church in Plaquemine by His Grace, Archbishop Blanc of New Orleans. This appointment was a source of joy to the Sisters, and the future for the little band brightened.

On January 18, 1859, the people of Plaquemine realized that the Sisters should have a home of their own, and one more in accordance with their vocation in life. Two Catholic gentlemen, Michael Schlatre and Michael Hebert, who had heretofore distinguished themselves by service for God and His Church, purchased from Doctor Scratchley a suitable site at the corner of Church and Court streets for $7,500, and presented it to the Sisters on the sole condition that the Community of the Marianite Sisters would have fifty Masses offered for their families.

The Academy prospered and grew apace until the War of the Secession broke out when Plaquemine fell into the hands of the Federals. During these trying times, Father Follot was all in all to the Sisters. Material needs were pressing; the disadvantages under which they labored were many; the work was arduous, but the devoted pastor was guide and help as well as strength to them. His beautiful spirit of faith kept theirs kindled, and his unwavering trust in the Mother of God was the flame that touched their hearts to ardor when hope burned low.

However, none dreamed how tragic would be the manner of fulfillment of their hopes. In 1862, the school was closed; the Sisters were recalled to Holy Angels Academy in New Orleans, and the property was used as Federal Headquarters until the close of the War. Truly could Father Abram Ryan, the poet-priest of the South, have said of Plaquemine:

> Enshrine the strife of the right with the wrong
> There is grandeur in graves . . . .
> There is glory in gloom;
> For out of the gloom future brightness is born,
> As after the night comes the sunrise of morn.

During the absence of the Sisters from their ill-fated mission, the zealous Father Follot never flagged in his devotion to the interests of his exiled little community, as instanced by the following letter, dated at Plaquemine, November 28, 1863, to Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus:

> Up to now, I have not without trouble defended your house at Plaquemine against all serious depredations of military occupation and other accidents of that kind. On November 26, Federal officers entered by force, and on the 27th carried off on their wagons the furniture they wanted. There is scarcely a hinge that is not broken, nor an **armoir** that has not been forced or opened with false keys as by true thieves. Chairs, rockers, tables, mattresses, glasses, clocks, geography maps—everything was taken for the service of Uncle Sam. Chance had it that I appeared on the scene before they finished their depredations, before they cleared out everything. I had to speak forcefully, then I went to the Colonel Commandant, who is worthy of being their chief—chief of such brigands. The house will not as yet be occupied nor converted into a military hospital. There is need, however, of a safeguard from General Banks to prevent greater destruction. If you can obtain one from the General-in-Chief, send it to me so that it may serve in your proper interests.
>
> I forgot to tell you that the door of the Tabernacle of the little chapel has been damaged. I am sending you these details not to give you further anxiety, but that you will act today according to your good pleasure. Not knowing who will be the reader of this letter, I will not enter into greater details.

Notwithstanding the fact that Plaquemine was a land where ruins were spread, the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross returned to St. Basil Academy September 5, 1865. There is something about the religious life that makes it resemble the military life; in both there is uniformity, the communal spirit, thorough organization, respect for authority and obedience. Perhaps, it is because of this, or perhaps it is because of the martial and indomitable spirit of Mother Mary of St. Bernard and the loyal Sisters who made up her corps of teachers that this brave band of exiled Sisters assembled again in their little chapel and sent up to Almighty God, the Arbiter of life and death, that grand and glorious hymn of thanksgiving, **Te Deum Laudamus!** As the darkness fell, and the hush of night silenced the sounds of the day, the true soldiers of Holy Cross returned with renewed spirit and unbounded energy to their beloved convent home.

The force that creates and sustains in a crisis is not quite the same that is wanted in time of ordinary routine to continue and to persevere, and yet much foresight, energy, and devotedness were needed when labors were not less strenuous, though they were directed in ways of peace.

It was then, with a truly heroic spirit, after the storm and stress of the War between the States were over, that Sister Mary of St. Bernard and her faithful co-laborers carried on the work of education at St. Basil's". Within one year after its reopening, the Academy was chartered and empowered to grant diplomas, February 2, 1866.

When one considers the systematic preparation of the Sisters for the work of teaching, and the training of the pupils under their care, one must admire the plan which made its future development possible. From the beginning of her administration, Sister Mary of St. Bernard, a veteran in the educational field, was in advance of her times. Many of the ideals promoted today as "new" by educators, were embodied in plans outlined, taught, and emphasized by her in word and deed all through the years of her active career as Superior. In the **Prospectus** of 1866, one sees the beginnings of St. Basil's present educational system.

St. Basil's enjoyed a new lease of life for seven years, and was progressing rapidly until October 7, 1873, when the fire of that day almost brought it to an end. The Chronicles of Holy Cross describe the fire, the devotedness of the Plaquemine people, and the wonderful spirit of faith and courage displayed by the Superior. Starting at 3:00 o'clock in the afternoon, the fire spread so rapidly that it was evident to everyone present the the convent could not be spared that day, notwithstanding the fact that the gentlemen of Plaquemine worked heroically. At this critical moment, Sister Mary of St. Francis rushed into the community room, took the statue of the Blessed Virgin with the Infant in her arms, raised the statue aloft and said, "My Blessed Mother, you are our only protection." Instantly, the wind that was blowing the flames so fiercely towards the main building changed its course, and the convent was saved.

The Most Reverend Archbishop accompanied by his Secretary, Reverend Father Anstaelt, visited the convent on October 12, a few days after the fire had taken place. With the tenderness of a kind spiritual father, His Grace sympathized with the Sisters over the loss they had sustained, and after having examined the whole course of the fire he said, 'It is evidently a miracle; nothing less." When the little statue, which the Superioress held in her hand during the dreadful crisis was brought before him, His Grace blessed it, commended their strong faith and confidence in the Blessed Virgin, and told them never to forget the special protection she evinced in their behalf at the fearful moment of such imminent danger. Before departing, the Archbishop addressed the students, recommending a true and solid devotion to our Beloved Queen of Heaven as one of the best and the safest means of attaining eternal happiness.

At last, a bright future seemed imminent for Plaquemine. The new pastor, Reverend M. R. Harnais, was installed, and he proved a staunch ally of Holy Cross. The spirit of progress which characterized the formative years of the little community did not falter; enthusiasm has to precede accomplishment, and this means a great deal in education. To enkindle a fire for knowledge, or to awaken a love for the higher things of life calls forth noble efforts; but to keep on rekindling fires and re-animating ardor is what counts in the training of youth. Sometimes it was almost the impossible that was undertaken, and the results only proved anew the blessings attached to simple faith and obedience. "Prayer and labor; labor and prayer," this was the program of every day and of every hour. Work begun for God and persevered in for His sake could not fail of abundant blessing.

Father Moreau's magnanimous spirit was manifestly shown through the sacrificial spirit of his daughters, the Marianites of Saint Basil's, when they agreed to bring the light of the Gospel to the colored race in Plaquemine. The question of a colored school was one proposed in many letters from Plaquemine to New Orleans. The opening of Saint Augustine's Colored School was delayed until January, 1882. For the first session, the number of pupils averaged from eighteen to twenty. The noble, self-sacrificing zeal of Sister Mary of St. Seraphia, Sister Mary of St. Leonie, Sister Mary of St. Macrina, Sister Mary of St. Colman, and last but not least, that of twenty-five years by Sister Mary of St. Gertrude has not been in vain.

In 1936 when the Josephite Fathers established their new mission at Plaquemine, they found the vineyard well tilled. Today at the beginning of Hain Street stands St. John's Catholic Church for Catholics of the white race, and at its end, the Immaculate Conception Catholic Church for the Negro race.

Father Harnais' zeal and desire for advancement were not yet satiated. In 1882 he also opened St. John's Free School for Boys, temporarily, in the old rectory. As times became more prosperous and more progressive, in 1889 the new St. John School was built, consisting of three rooms besides an exhibition and Music Hall. This building was a total loss, as it was destroyed by fire in 1906 during Father Holgrove's administration. A temporary building was erected on the West side of the Church and used for several years while preparations were under way for the construction of a new and more substantial building.

Aptly does the saying, "To failure doomed, but fated not to die," describe the history of the Boys' School in Plaquemine. From the smoldering ashes of the two previous schools came forth, Phoenix-like, the present imposing structure, erected in 1910, a monument to the foresight, the zeal and the exceptional skill of the Reverend Gerard Bosch of beloved memory.

Acceptance of tribulations is the touchstone of that faith and zeal so necessary for the foundation and the development of apostolic work, a tribulation which must be learned, not only in the classroom of theory but also in the laboratory of experience. Almost without exception, one shall find those destined to do great things for God sustained by the invisible thread of faith and the fingertips of prayer.

Truly, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Gold must be fire-tried. Small wonder, then, that St. Basil's pioneers, whose souls were tried in the furnace of tribulation, should have steered St. Basil's bark so successfully as to enable it, later, to be merged by the hands of a master pilot, the Reverend Leonard Robin, into a "Greater St. John's."

Divine Providence not only set its zeal on the past joys and sorrows, successes and failures, but also on the future ideals, hopes, and blessed promises always attendant upon a new enterprise. The present that forgets its past can hope for no future; hence, if our present Parochial schools are enjoying in Plaquemine an enviable reputation today, it is a tribute to the initiative, the effort, the success of yesteryears. Impregnated with this thought, we shall now attempt to write the final paragraphs in the story of ninety years.

A new phase in our educational system was inaugurated with the installation of the Reverend Leonard Robin as irremovable Pastor of St. John the Evangelist Church June 30, 1933. With the keen perception of an experienced educator, Father Robin immediately sensed the fact that St. Basil Academy had long outgrown its capacity to accommodate the fast developing growth of the school. In September 1933, he introduced co-education, merging St. John's Free School for Boys with St. Basil Academy for girls, thus laying the foundation for a most beneficial co-educational system which has surpassed his most sanguine hopes. So successful did this new trend prove that the High-school Department, which since its foundation had been housed in St. Basil Academy, had to be transferred to another building in September, 1937.

Again it became imperative within two years to meet the demands of an ever-growing student body with modern classroom facilities. Catholic High-School students found a new building awaiting them when they returned to classes September 4, 1939. This building was the property formerly occupied by P. Ephraim and Sons, next to the Rectory. Renovation work, under the direction of Father Robin, went on for several months prior to occupation by the students. Remodeling, painting, putting in a library fully equipped, desks, and blackboards, soon made this department store take on the appearance of a place of learning. Using this building for the High-School classes caused space to be released at the old St. Basil's for elementary classrooms.

St. John's High School from its very beginning gained recognition for its high scholastic standards. The ideals of honesty, integrity, modesty and will power are kept before the eyes of the students in every phase of school life, social as well as educational. Here the students breathe an atmosphere that is redolent of Christ Himself. All of these advantages have come to the students through the able direction of their Pastor, the Reverend Leonard Robin.

The High School publishes a very creditable bi-monthly paper, the **St. John Eagle.** Running four pages an issue, with illustrations, its issues are eagerly awaited by the student body. Couched in student language, the **Eagle** approaches the problems and questions of teen-agers with the outlook that attempts to solve all questions.

Each year at St. John's is filled by many activities which tend to make High-School years the best of one's life. In the fall, the school glows with colorful decorations, while the walls echo the laughter of joyful students enjoying the traditional Hallowe'en. Christmas brings the peal of sleigh bells and the merry voices of the choristers clear upon the evening air. Many and varied as the socials are, the Junior-Senior Prom is considered the most important occasion of the school year and is a fitting tribute to those who will soon leave the school to follow their respective vocations.

St. John"s is endowed with a number of efficient organizations; the most outstanding of which is the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin. During the last few years it has carved a distinguished niche in the arch of Catholic action. As with all organizations, the Sodality has its Prefect and other officers, who preside over meetings and conduct them in a business-like manner. Informal reports are delivered touching upon the particular activities of the month.

The Sodality Moderator, Reverend Leonard Robin, spares no pains in impressing upon the mind of each and every sodalist her duties as a Child of Mary and a Catholic girl.

If the results of this organization could be measured by the increase of enthusiasm manifested for higher things, then the fruit of its existence is most gratifying.

St. John's Band has at last come into its own! It enjoys the distinction of being numbered among the best in the Parish. During the last few years, it has been making rapid progress under the able direction of the Reverend G. Barbier and Sister Mary of St. Leonard. Boys and girls of the Band in their blue and gold uniforms make a striking picture and are much in demand, always reflecting great credit upon their instructors. Long may St. John's Band continue to shower glory upon its fond Alma Mater!

"We've got the best club in all the Parish,
We've got a 4-H that can't be beat!"

These words were written for the 1946 Achievement Day when St. John's 4-H Club, under the leadership of competent officers, walked off with every honor that could be bestowed on a club and with the 1946 Parish sweep-stakes to boot.

Eighty members in the High School, and sixty in the Elementary, now compose one of the largest 4-H clubs in Iberville Parish. Numerous projects are open to both girls and boys. A great deal of activity is displayed by every member in these individual projects. It is with just pride that we admit ours is second to none in this Parish-wide 4-H Club organization.

The religious atmosphere of St. John's is of a very high order as evidenced by the number of boys and girls who have sacrificed even the legitimate pleasures of the world in order to dedicate and to consecrate themselves to the service of God in the priestly and the religious state.

Plaquemine has given five fervent young men to the holy priesthood: Reverend Joseph Heidell, C.Ss.R., Right Reverend Monsignor George Mollo, Reverend Errol Marrionneaux, Reverend Henry Neubig, and Reverend Thomas Allain. Father Allain was ordained on June 7, 1947, as he is the first graduate of St. John High School to be ordained (the others attended the old school of St. Basil), all of his teachers and schoolmates are proud of Father Allain. At present, four more of the school's recent Alumni are studying at St. Benedict's Preparatory Seminary, and are doing excellent work, both in the spiritual and the intellectual field.

St. Basil's, whose brief history has been unfolded here, is ninety years old. Built on the bed rock of the past, St. John's, vigorous in the turmoil of the present, bids fair to have an even more successful future than its elder brother, St. Basil's. If prophet-like we gaze into the future, we wish St. John's to keep forever young; young in energy, in strength, in courage; yet old in patience, in endurance. We wish to see it a mighty factor for good in Church and State, realizing that the spirit of the age is the spirit which Catholic education gives to it. We wish St. John's to stand for the highest and the best in faith and hope and love and knowledge, and, like the Eagle of the Apocalypse, to soar ever higher until it attains here on earth the nearest approach to the Eternal.

SPIRITUAL SERVICE OF MARIANITE STUDENTS
PLAQUEMINE

Sister Mary of St. Bertha	Anna McKenna
Sister Mary of St. Justin	Mary Neubig
Sister Mary of St. Dorothy	Thelma Miremont
Sister Mary of St. Vincent Ferrer	Adveline Hiriart
Sister Mary of St. Melanie	Rose Babin
Sister Mary of St. Isabelle	Rose Daigre
Sister Mary of St. Edmund	Doris Schexnaidre
Sister Mary of St. Leonard	Margery Bergeron
Sister Mary of St. Celestine	Rita Mae Aycock
Sister Mary of St. Gregory	Merle Trosclair
Sister Mary of St. Raymond	Edna Mae Landry
Sister Mary of St. Charles	Margaret Clement
Sister Mary of St. Eugenie	Marian Trosclair
Sister Mary of St. Teresita	Elaine Louviere
Sister Mary of St. Bernardine	Anna May Hill
Sister Mary of St. Cesaria	Ruth Mary Martinez
Sister Mary of St. Jane Frances	Lila Ann Dardenne
Sister Mary of St. Benedict	Gladys Allain
Sister Mary of St. Bruno	Rita Ruth Avet

SUPERIORS OF ST. BASIL ACADEMY
PLAQUEMINE

1857—	(Pioneers unknown)
1861-1862	Sister Mary of St. Michael
1862-1863	Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart
1863-1865	(Academy was closed for Civil War Period)
1865-1869	Sister Mary of St. Bernard
1869-1870	Sister Mary of St. Francis
1870-1872	Sister Mary of the Passion
1872-1873	Sister Mary of St. Veronica
1873-1882	Sister Mary of St. Francis
1882-1883	Sister Mary of St. Albert
1884-1885	Sister Mary of St. Claire
1886-1888	Sister Mary of St. Sebastian
1889-1890	Sister Mary of St. Anthony
1890-1895	Sister Mary of St. Veronica
1896-1898	Sister Mary of St. Albina
1898-1903	Sister Mary of St. Sebastian
1904-1908	Sister Mary of St. Albina
1909-1911	Sister Mary of St. James
1912-1914	Sister Mary of St. Adrian
1915-1916	Sister Mary of St. Anthony
1916-1917	Sister Mary of St. Norbert
1918-1922	Sister Hary of St. Albert
1923-1924	Sister Mary of St. Eusebia
1925-1927	Sister Mary of St. Norbert
1927-1928	Sister Mary of St. Olympia
1929-1930	Sister Mary of St. Rosalie
1930-1931	Sister Mary of St. Francis De Sales
1932-1934	Sister Mary of St. Angela
1934-1940	Sister Mary of St. Victorine
1940-1941	Sister Mary of St. Casimir
1941-1947	Sister Mary of St. Victorine
1947-1948	Sister Mary of St. Lua

CHAPTER TEN

IN THE BEND OF THE CRESCENT

IN 1869, THE YEAR in which Sts. Peter and Paul Parochial School was established in New Orleans, Louisiana's credit was absolutely wiped out in European money markets, and the whole nation was on the brink of the depression of the "Seventies." It is true more public schools sprang up in the middle 19th century period, but this was because New Orleans acquired the John McDonogh Fund. Early public schools were nominally for paupers. This put a stigma on them that was not easily erased. Carpetbag schools were for mixed races; hence, their unpopularity. The South did arise after the overthrow of the Carpetbag regime. Churches and schools seemed to prosper despite conditions, not because of them. Those who could still afford to educate their daughters and sons were no longer able to send them elsewhere. The conditions were such, with freed slaves and Carpetbaggers so much in evidence, that young people were safer under the Sisters' supervision. Church regulations also helped to increase the demand for Catholic schools. Such were the conditions when Reverend Cornelius Moynihan was given the supervision of the English-speaking people of the Third District with the idea of establishing a parish.

Born in Kanturk, County Cork, Ireland, on Christmas Day, 1822, Cornelius Moynihan was educated at Missionary College, Youghal, County Cork, and later followed his brother, Jeremiah's, edifying example as a missionary. While still a seminarian, he came to America. After completing his theological studies in New Orleans, in the early 1840's, he was ordained on March 19, 1848, by His Grace, Archbishop Antoine Blanc, and sent to establish Sts. Peter and Paul Parish.

Father Moynihan's eloquent sermons soon drew a large congregation about him. A frame structure, built on Marigny between Royal and Dauphine streets, soon proved inadequate, for as the pastor became more and more renowned, his church was filled to overflowing. A larger and more suitable edifice, which was built in 1860, a splendid example of the solid and simple style of Victorian architecture then in vogue, shows evidence of the Romanesque influence. Remodeled, the old church served as the parochial school building until 1899 when a new up-to-date structure was erected in Burgundy Street by the Very Reverend Joseph Hanrahan, Father Moynihan's successor.

Classes began on Monday, September 5, 1869, with 175 pupils, which, considering conditions, was a very good enrollment. The Third District, where the school was located, was suffering from the aftermath of the war, but the disrupted economic system, political crises, and empty purses could be bravely faced by people of heroic idealism and staunch courage to whom privations and humiliations were but stepping stones to a new epoch.

Father Moynihan left his impress not only on his generation but on succeeding ones. He possessed an intriguing personality, being at one and the same time eloquent and sympathetic, charitable, earnest and interested in all that concerned his parishioners. Many of the outstanding activities of the school were inaugurated by him. Not only was he concerned with the spiritual but also the temporal welfare of his people. He even conducted a private bank in downtown New Orleans, and invested money for his parishioners.

Reverend Father Moynihan invited the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross to take charge of the school. In 1872, with the Pastor's sanction, the Sisters established the Societies of the Holy Angels and the Children of Mary. In the same year the beautiful devotions of the month of May were started. In 1875 the three-days' preparation for First Communion became an established rule. As early as 1876 the little ones attending Sts. Peter and Paul School sang **Vespers** on Sunday evenings. Thus did Sts. Peter and Paul Church and School commence the work that was to identify them later on as one of the important parochial groups of the Archdiocese.

The aim of these educators seems to have been a general determination to apply all of religion to all of life, and to inculcate a conviction that all daily activities are conditioned by the truths of religion and by the lessons of the Gospel of Christ. One community historian records most sanguine hopes for the children enrolled at Sts. Peter and Paul:

> Nowhere could a more docile spirit or naturally better disposition be found than among the little children, some of whose faces beam with intelligence, goodness and innocence. It is hoped that the attendance of pupils will become larger every year in order that the tender minds of those who are to compose the future generation may receive good impressions,

> and that their young hearts may be early imbued with the love of their holy religion. Thus will the Faith be transmitted in all its purity to future generations.[1]

The spirit of the first Marianites who taught at Sts. Peter and Paul School was identical with the spirit of Christ on the cross, thirsting for souls. After a long day's work in the classroom, the Sisters would teach catechism to groups of boys and girls who were too poor to pay anything for their education. The Sisters' only concern was the preparation of these children for the proper reception of the Sacraments, and the spreading of God's Kingdom.

After thirty years of missionary labors, Reverend Father Cornelius Moynihan breathed forth his soul in peace with his Maker February 11, 1879. The **Picayune** of February 12, 1879, described him as follows:

> The deceased was universally esteemed and respected by his associates and all who came under his benign ministrations. He was a patient, earnest and indefatigable laborer in the cause of Christ. Father Moynihan was an active citizen, when called upon to identify himself with any movement for civic welfare. His interest in upbuilding the Church in New Orleans reached far into other fields and his influence still lingers amidst the results of his labors. He and his brother, Jeremiah, who was the founder of St. John Baptist Church, were both canons of the Cathedral and counsellors of the Archbishop.

With the arrival of a new pastor, the Reverend John B. Flanagan, the work received new impetus. The school, like "Ole Man River," just a few blocks away from it, went on and on. Superior followed superior; faculty followed faculty; yet their ways were ever the ways of Holy Cross, meeting the educational needs of the day.

It was not until the dawn of the 20th century that the school on Marigny street was abandoned. A new pastor, the Very Reverend Joseph Hanrahan, a virile man of the old school, came to Sts. Peter and Paul Church. Father Hanrahan was born in Cahir, County Tipperary, Ireland. Like his predecessors, he came to America in his youth to work in Louisiana. His achievements from the very start of his priestly labors prove how true he was to his motto: "He does much who does well what he does." After a short curacy at St. Mary's Church in New Orleans, in 1895, and at St. Patrick's, he was named pastor at Bayou Goula, where he had the happiness of building the White Castle Church of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, the first Church in Louisiana dedicated under that title.

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[1] Chronicles, House of Sts. Peter and Paul, New Orleans.

In 1896 Father Hanrahan was made rector of the very flourishing Parish of Sts. Peter and Paul, and was for the long extent of his pastorate one of the few irremovable pastors in New Orleans. Father Hanrahan's work speaks for itself.

Many men and women. Alumni of the school, fashioned by the Marianites under this pastor's care, are rendering splendid service to Church and state. To cite a few examples, the following received their early education at Sts. Peter and Paul School:

Miss Marie Louise Points, **Picayune** reporter; later, editor of the **Morning Star,** Diocesan Catholic weekly paper.

Miss Mercedes Discon, State President, Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, Public school teacher, and instructor at Loyola University.

Honorable Augustus G. Williams, former Recorder of Mortgages, Lawyer, orator, and political leader. He received a commission as Judge.

Francis Williams, younger brother of Augustus G., Lawyer and politician, Public Service Commissioner (1922-1934) Chairman of Commission (1929-1934.)

Eugene Stanley, District Attorney, afterwards Attorney General.

Numerous are the names of those who vie for recognition, and who prove by their successful careers the fostering care and inspiration given them by Reverend Father Hanrahan.

Father Hanrahan arrived in 1896. In 1906, a new school, Sts. Peter and Paul, designed by General Allison Owen, and typical of the nineteenth century, was ready for occupancy.

Under Reverend Father Hanrahan's supervision, both church and school progressed until God called him to Himself in 1945. In November, 1945, the Reverend Charles Carroll was appointed Pastor. Under his administration both church and school have gone forward. The 1947-48 session showed an enrollment of 412 students. The problem confronting the new pastor is that of providing room for the increasing enrollment.

Marianite Superiors who did their part in keeping this school alive and promoting its interests since 1868 were as follows:

Sister Mary of St. Charles 1869-1874
Sister Mary of St. Columba 1874-1895
Sister Mary of St. Praxedes 1895-1904
Sister Mary of St. Justin 1904-1909
Sister Mary of St. Frederick 1909-1912
Sister Mary of St. Casimir 1912-1921
Sister Mary of St. Adrian 1921-1923
Sister Mary of St. Albert 1923-1929
Sister Mary of St. Casimir 1929-1932
Sister Mary of St. Lelia 1932-1933
Sister Mary of St. Finbarr 1933-1934
Sister Mary of St. Casimir 1934-1940
Sister Mary of St. Aloysius 1940-1946
Sister Mary of St. Kevin 1946-

The Reverend Pastors of Sts. Peter and Paul Church were:

Reverend Cornelius Moynihan (1848-1879)
Reverend Jeremiah Moynihan (1879-1881)
Reverend B. M. Kenny (1881-1885)
Reverend John D. Flanagan (1885-1895)
Reverend Joseph Hanrahan (1895-1945)
Reverend Charles Carroll (1945-)

Their names are inseparable from any record of the school as their piety, scholarship, and love of the beautiful must have become part of each pupil's endowment. It is not to be wondered at that Saints Peter and Paul School gave many of its pupils to the religious life; a goodly number of them found their way into the ranks of Holy Cross:

Sister Mary of St. Etienne	Mary Ann Mullen
Sister Mary of St. Pancrace	Catherine Mullen
Sister Mary of St. Aloysius	Theresa Lawrence
Sister Mary of St. Edward	Mary Stella Gibson
Sister Mary of St. Praxeda	Irene Discon
Sister Mary of St. Francis Regis	Marguerite Discon
Sister Mary of St. Bonaventure	Elaine Esteves
Sister Mary Rosario	Mary Leonardi
Sister Mary of St. Ambrose	Ellen Dailey

Vocations to the Holy Priesthood

Reverend Anthony F. Mangiaracina, S.J.
Reverend Michel Blaise Majoli, S.J.

HOLY NAME OF MARY SCHOOL

ALGIERS, LA.

SIXTY YEARS AGO, Algiers was not the busy, bustling suburb of New Orleans that it is today with numerous industrial plants, shipyards, dry docks and iron works dotting the west bank of the Mississippi. The Fifteenth Ward of New Orleans was just asserting its right to an honorable district of the South's metropolitan city, proving to the little world about it that Algiers, an inglorious epithet bestowed upon her in early times as a little Algiers, was to become a name which would stand for progressiveness and service rather than a counterpart of the notorious Mediterranean port. The former hang-out for rough flatboatmen and dubious characters from all countries was to give to New Orleans an Archbishop and an outstanding mayor, and become an imporetant part of the "nation's second port."

The sustaining thought that encouraged six pioneer Marianites as they opened a house in Algiers on September 6, 1888, must indeed have been, **"O crux, ave, spes unica!"** (O holy Cross, our only hope!")

On the feast of the Holy Name of Mary, under the leadership of the Superioress, Sister Mary of St. Georgia (Larose), the little band of devoted missionaries, Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, took possession of their new home. They were accompanied by their Mother Provincial, Mother Mary of St. Cesaria (McDonnell), who, we are told, "by kindly advice and cheering, encouraging words, revived the Sisters' spirits and dispelled the fears and doubts which must inevitably arise on the eve of a great undertaking."

The **Chronicles** describe the convent as,

> A two-story frame building, containing on the first floor a little chapel or oratory in which the Holy Sacrifice is offered every Saturday, and where the Community may have the happiness of visiting our dear Lord in the Blessed Sacrament; a sacristy, providing communication with the chapel by means of folding doors; a community room; a refectory; a **lamp-room;** and two small sitting rooms for the Sisters. On the second floor is the Sisters' dormitory, a spacious and well-ventilated apartment. Adjoining this is a large attic which may serve as a baggage room. A little to the rear in the kitchen, a wash-house is provided.

The Fifth District, of which Algiers is a part, is said to comprise five thousand inhabitants, the majority being Roman Catholics. The people are of a hard-working class, honest and industrious. Here, indeed, was a wide field of labor. To train the little ones of these good people to a love and knowledge of their Creator and Redeemer was an undertaking that called for much earnestness of purpose and nobility of life.

In 1865 His Grace, the Most Reverend Jean Marie Odin, offered the parish of the Holy Name of Mary to the Fathers of the Society of Mary. Upon a satisfactory report from Reverend Father Bellanger, the Superior General of the Society of Mary accepted the offer and sent three Marist Fathers to the new post. The zeal of these sons of Mary knew no bounds, and under the capable guidance of Reverend Fathers Denis, Bellanger, Brady, Pompallier, Chatigner, they left no stone unturned to increase devotion and love of Christ and His Blessed Mother in the hearts of each member of their flock.

Reverend James Goggan, S.M., a former assistant of Holy Name of Mary Church, was well aware of the problems which confronted him when in 1888 he was made pastor of this ever-growing parish. The first problem to receive his attention was the necessity of a Catholic Parochial School. Hitherto about eight hundred Catholic children of Algiers had attended public school while only 200 attended a Catholic school. The Sisters of Mount Carmel had been in the parish since 1857, but they taught only girls. Father Goggan wanted a Parochial school in charge of Sisters who would be willing to teach boys as well as girls. Consequently, the Sisters of Mount Carmel sold their interest to the Marist Fathers, who then applied to the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross for teachers to staff both the Girls and the Boys' schools.

Indeed, God blessed the Sisters' work. The following year, the enrollment necessitated an increased faculty. Another Sister was sent to Algiers. This has been repeated time and time again until Holy Name of Mary School now boasts a faculty of fifteen Religious and five secular teachers, and an enrollment of over nine hundred students.

The Marianites would not be true Marianites if they did not experience the cross in the form of some trial. Many trials awaited them to test the mettle of these pioneer Marianites—at first, a devastating fire, then the loss of a Reverend Director and bereavement for a loved companion succeeded one another. About three-thirty on the morning of May 14, 1891, the Sisters were awakened by the cry of "Fire!" Immediately, flames were seen bursting forth from the roof of the boys' school. In an instant, the whole building, consisting of an exhibition hall, a billiard room, and a club room on the ground floor and classrooms on the second, was one mass of fiery flames. The furniture and the pupils' books were burned; nothing remained but a charred and blackened heap of ruin. Again the Sisters braved the situation, and, in order to continue their educational work, offered the convent itself to be used for the boys' classes.

The disaster occasioned by the fire served to aggravate a previous loss. Reverend Father Morrin, S.M., director of the school, had been moved to another house of the Marists. In this kind director, the Sisters had a sympathetic friend, ever ready to encourage and console them; the school, boys and girls, found in him an energetic and painstaking superintendent, who employed every means in his power to make the work under his control a success. As yet, the Marianites did not realize these qualities were characteristic not only of Reverend Father Morrin, S.M., but of the Marist Order. The following sixty years of service in the Parochial school of Algiers were to bear witness to this fact.

The third loss was irreparable. One of the first missioners, Sister Mary of St. Catherine (Goodwin) died on the morning of September 10, 1891.

That the people of Algiers were being awakened from their spiritual lethargy is witnessed by the increased numbers of children receiving first Holy Communion:

May 15, 1889— 60
May 31, 1891—150
April 22, 1900—300

On October 25, 1891, His Lordship, the Most Reverend Francis Janssens, solemnly blessed the new Boys' School. The Sisters now felt that a hopeful future was ahead.

Within a year, the field of labor was extended by adding a class for colored children under the supervision of Sister Mary of St. Ferdinand (McCracken.)

At the expiration of the first five years, Sister Mary of St. Georgia (Larose) was replaced by Sister Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan), who for six years exerted a lasting influence in Algiers. A remarkable woman, gifted with keen intellect, and of a will that could not be thwarted in any undertaking, Sister Mary of St. Raphael was the embodiment of many notable characteristics of the Irish race.

The scholastic session was resumed with an encouraging attendance. A marked feature of the opening session was the erection of a school house for the colored children at a short distance from the one formerly used. Father Roman, S.M., was not satisfied with the school for the colored, which Father Goggan, S.M., had temporarily arranged in an old building. Unwilling to add a new burden on the white people, he applied to Mother Catherine Drexel,[1] whose generous heart never failed in a case of this kind, and he obtained from her the sum of $1,000. With this sum of money he put up a two-room building, so arranged that the teacher could care for boys in one room and girls in another. This chool, known as the Drexel School, was visited by His Lordship, the Most Reverend Francis Janssens, who congratulated Sister Mary of Et. Ferdinand (McCracken) upon the success which had crowned her noble sacrifice. It is amusing to the present generation to read that Sister Mary of St. Ferdinand was so revered by her charges that they burned candles before her picture. It is true that all went well under Sister Mary of St. Ferdinand's guidance, but when she left, the number of pupils declined so rapidly that the school had to be closed. The probable date for the termination of the school is generally given as 1898.

The first academic graduation at Holy Name of Mary School was held June 27, 1895. The convent had taken a step forward. Public examinations were the order of the day. The **Chronicles** state:

> Examinations have just closed with satisfaction to the examiners, teachers, and pupils. Reverend Fathers Roman, Dempsey, and Gibbons, with Mother Provincial and a member of her council, conducted the examinations. Throughout the classes, there is a marked improvement over former years, which vouches for diligence and application.

Sister Mary of St. Raphael's generosity and sympathetic understanding of the sorrows of those in trouble showed itself by her ready response in dispensing charity to the poor sufferers of another fire that raged in Algiers on the morning of October 20, 1895, leaving one hundred and twenty families homeless and destitute.

The school was thrown open and shelter offered these afflicted people. The Sisters, under Sister Mary of St. Raphael's supervision, assisted in distributing food, clothing, and household utensils furnished by a Fire Relief Committee.

Sister Mary of St. Raphael described the heart-rending scene as follows:

> It was a sight fitted to move the most callous to see poor mothers clutching their frightened babes, trying to hush their

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[1] Foundress of the Sisters of the Most Blessed Sacrament for the Negroes and the Indians.

cries, and guarding the battered remains of their household goods which were thrown on the roadside.

A malignant fever which spread through city and country in the fall of 1897 caused the schools to remain closed from September until November. Two of the priests were stricken, and the rectory was quarantined. For three weeks the people gathered with the Sisters in the church daily to recite the Holy Rosary.

When conditions became normal, the Sisters sought to stimulate interest and to encourage the pupils by conducting a series of monthly Sunday evening concerts complimentary to the parents. These occasions, while providing a refined and classical form of recreation, awakened an interest which proved beneficial to the school. It was at the second of these concerts that the children extended their congratulations to their dear Pastor, the Reverend Hubert Blenk, on his appointment by the Holy See to the office of Apostolic Delegate to Cuba and Puerto Rico.

The appointment of Father Blenk, S.M., as Bishop to Puerto Rico followed in April, 1899. The date of consecration was scheduled for Sunday, July 2, 1899. The people of Algiers showed their great love and esteem for Reverend Father Blenk by the presentation of gifts pertinent to his approaching office. These gifts not only represented the entire Parish of the Holy Name of Mary but also the children attending the school.

In St. Mary's Hall, on June 30, the presentation of the gifts occurred. The first gift was the purple and red gloves from the school children; the Cappa Magna from the Knights of America; the Mantelet and Cape from the Catholic Club, and, finally, the parish at large offered him the staff of office, his Crozier.

It was not until November, however, that Bishop Blenk sailed for his See. On the eighteenth, hundreds of friends came to Algiers to bid him farewell. The school children feted the Bishop-elect, who was accompanied by his friends, Reverend Fathers Joyce, S.M. and Dempsey, S.M. In a naive manner, the **Chronicles** state:

> His Grace was escorted to the chair of state, and the children sang with touching pathos, "Farewell, my Louisiana." Then a quartet of little girls sang a number of old-time melodies which Bishop Blenk loved. The boys gave a splendid drill, and a small girl in touching tones voiced the sentiments of the Parochial school children at parting with their beloved Pastor.

Bishop Blenk, in his earnest way of reaching hearts, told how deeply touched he felt over the beautiful program, and, particularly, by the parting words of his dear children of the Algiers school, saying that though far away in body, he would ever be present with them in spirit; and wherever he would be as the years sped on, he would ever pray for these little children who were his first pastoral charges, and who had given him so much pleasure and satisfaction by their good conduct, obedience, and fidelity to their faith. Later, Bishop Blenk verified his words after his consecration as Archbishop of New Orleans. Frequently, he would find time to visit Algiers, and he never failed to visit the school on these occasions.

During the course of these years, it was the school's privilege to have as guests the Most Reverend Father Redwood; the Archbishop of Wellington, New Zealand, and his secretary, Reverend Father O'Mahoney. Frequent and satisfying visits of His Lordship, Most Reverend Francis Janssens and other ecclesiastical and educational authorities and the constant interest manifested by the Marist Fathers, Reverend Fathers Joyce, Roman, Dempsey, and Gibbons, who were missioned in Algiers, were a real stimulus to both teachers and pupils.

The Twentieth century was destined to bring to the Marianites of Holy Cross at Holy Name of Mary School, Algiers, a Superior, youthful it is true, but possessed of such talents and untiring efforts that would make of the humble establishment one of religious culture. Sister Mary Xavier (Haggerty), who was elected in 1932 Provincial Superior of the Congregation in Louisiana, was no stranger to Algiers. She knew what it was to leave the gentle peace of the downtown convent home to embark at an early hour on the old Third District ferry, and to travel with the companionship of a chattering orphan in the cold winter blasts and the heat of the summer sun. Through rushing lines of west-bank workmen, she had made her way to engage in teaching and developing the youthful musical talent of Algierians, little realizing that her many fruitful years, as a musician, a Superior, and, later, as the Mother Provincial, would reap a glorious golden harvest.

In her mature years as Provincial Superior, Mother often smilingly relates the incident when she was sent to Algiers as Superior at so youthful an age. She complained to the Superior General, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors (Gascoin) of her "youth and inexperience." The Mother General's answer was, "If age and experience were all that was wanting, both would come with the years." Years were not needed for Mother Mary Xavier to learn how to exercise her natural executive ability. From the very start, hers was the assurance of success which attends the efforts of those fired with zeal for the glory of God, the love of souls, and devotedness to their community.

The good and humble Pastor of Holy Name of Mary Church, Reverend Father Joyce, S.M., was indeed a true father, a kind friend, and a prudent advisor of the inexperienced, zealous Superior. In 1899 he replaced Reverend Hubert Blenk, S.M., but in 1901 he was called by his Divine Master to give an account of his stewardship. In his death, Algiers lost a devoted father; the Sisters, a loyal friend.

Father Joyce's loss seemed irreparable, yet God, in His Providence, sent to these bereaved people a Pastor whose record of nineteen years was outstanding. Very Reverend Thomas J. Larkin, S.M., arrived in Algiers March 20, 1901.

Sister Mary Xavier's first plans included a Kindergarten to supply a long-felt need. Here the very young children were initiated in Catholic education. It was a most wise step as it served later as the source from which the private Communion classes were drawn. Hundreds of little tots were trained here to receive their Eucharistic Lord in observance of the decree of Pope Pius X for the early reception of the Holy Eucharist. This phase of the school work especially appealed to Father Larkin who enjoyed spending many hours in the innocent company of these kindergarten children, of whom Christ Himself had said, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Sister Mary Xavier continued the monthly concerts started in 1899, and, as music director, inspired a more noticeable appreciation of this art among the youth of Algiers.

A Commercial department was soon added, and, later on, an Academic department. Nor was the work limited to the imparting of mere secular knowledge. An atmosphere of religion and culture dominated every undertaking. In spiritual matters especially, great care was taken: Missions were frequently held in the interest of the children, sodalities flourished, active membership was held in the association of the Holy Childhood, and an annual increase in the number of those in the Communion and Confirmation classes was noted.

Two great joys are recorded within the span of Sister Mary Xavier's administration: the first was one in which the people of Algiers shared when their former Pastor, the Most everend Hubert Blenk, D.D., then appointed to the vacant See of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, returned to Algiers in this capacity to prove to his former flock that he had kept them in remembrance through his years in Puerto Rico.

The second joy came to the parishioners of Algiers in 1913, the year of Jubilee both for the Marist Fathers and the Marianite Sisters. The occasion was that of fifty golden years rich in their harvest of souls in the parish of the Holy Name of Mary. The closing festivities of the Golden Jubilee coincided with the school's commencement exercises. The following September the Marianite Sisters celebrated the Silver Jubilee of their coming to Algiers. His Grace, the Most Reverend Archbishop Blenk and his secretary, the Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard (later Bishop of Lafayette) graced the occasion.

Often a note of joy is followed by a note of sorrow. The historic storm of 1915 left both the convent and the school seriously damaged. Generosity, however, has always been an outstanding trait of the Algiers parishioners. Once more they proved by their benevolence their interest in the progress of the school.

On April 2, 1917, the beloved Archbishop Blenk was called to his eternal reward. The entire archdiocese of New Orleans was bereaved, but especially Algiers, where His Grace had spent so many years in the vineyard of the Master. Even at the close of his life, he was so attached to the people of Algiers that despite his weak health he would prolong his visits by remaining to enjoy a short program presented by the pupils.

The epidemic of influenza in 1918 was another cause of the school's closing. Not even churches were open at this time for fear of contagion among the populace. Not until the latter part of November, 1918, were the schools and all public buildings where crowds congregated permitted to open their doors.

June 3, 1920 marked the Silver Jubilee of the Superior, Sister Mary Xavier. On this occasion the people of Algiers fittingly expressed their appreciation of her great work by appropriate celebrations.

Through the years Very Reverend Thomas J. Larkin, S.M. and Sister Mary Xavier had proven themselves organizers and educators. Visitors to the school and the Parish were united in the opinion that in Algiers the interests of Holy Mother Church were being vigorously defended. Theirs is a glorious record of noble accomplishments. The increased demand in the field of education both in regard to teachers and pupils were met with creditable efficiency. Extra-curricular activities, civic enterprises, national campaigns and religious celebrations, in which the school always participated actively, proved the versatile ability and the cultural advantages acquired by the children in their education at Holy Name of Mary School.

In the history of the Marist Fathers of Algiers is recorded the following tribute to Sister Mary Xavier (Haggerty):

> While speaking of the schools in Father Larkin's administration and of their success, it should be remembered that a good deal

> of that success and of the popularity of the school was due to a wonderful helper, a great organizer, Mother Mary Xavier, who for twenty years labored among the Algiers people, giving them the best of her talents, working always in co-operation with the Clergy of the Parish, ever developing in the children entrusted to her care the sense of gratitude and devotedness for the priests who sacrifice their lives for their flock.
>
> In the field of Catholic education, Mother Xavier has always followed in the footsteps of her great patron. Nothing was left undone to broaden the scope of Catholic education, and each succeeding year made this more evident as the enrollment mounted until in 1920, 700 pupils were registered in the school.

Upon Sister Mary Xavier's departure, Sister Mary of St. Antonine (Brown) came to Algiers as Superioress. The duties of the pastorate of Holy Name of Mary Church were likewise transferred from Reverend Father Larkin, S.M. to Reverend Father Cotter, S.M. Sister Mary of St. Antonine had spent some of her early years of religious life in devoted service at Holy Name of Mary School.

For a third time, fire damaged a part of the convent, on December 14, 1922, and part of the Girls' School. At this time, the large enrollment and overcrowded conditions made imperative the erection of a new school. From the year 1917 onward, the Algiers people had been conscious of the need of a new school, and had already taken steps to obtain the needed funds. Wholeheartedly, they co-operated in the various benefits given for this cause, showing thereby their realization of the value of a Catholic education. In September, 1923, the convent was moved in order to provide space for the new building. During the interim classes were held in the Parish Hall. Great joy was experienced when the first pile was driven on February 22, 1924.

On October 21, 1924, the dream of many years was fulfilled as the children of Algiers walked in procession to take possession of the new school. The imposing $115,000 brick edifice, the fruit of sacrifice and prayer, was one of which the parishioners, the Sisters and the Marist Fathers could justly be proud.

The following Superiors guarded the ensuing years which brought many blessings and changes together with much happiness to the Algiers foundation: Sister Mary of St. Seraphia (O'Brien) replaced Sister Mary of St. Antonine (Brown) in 1926. Ill health forced her to relinquish her office of Superioress in November 1927 to Sister Mary of St. Casimir (O'Sullivan). Although Sister Mary of St. Seraphia remained in Algiers but a short while, her influence was deeply felt among the pupils of the school.

For the following scholastic session, Sister Mary of St. Casimir (O'Sullivan) was Superioress. During this year, the children participated in varied and many activities of both the school and the parish. A great increase was noticeable in the Communion and Confirmation classes.

Sister Mary of St. Albert (Hayes), a loveable character, endeared herself to all by her kindness (1928-1932). She was a native of Rosscarberry, County Cork, Ireland. Her years in religion were devoted to teaching, and her love of the beautiful and her high ideals were imparted to those with whom she came in contact.

In September, 1928, the enrollment of Holy Name of Mary School had reached a total of 850 pupils. At the close of a year filled with activities, April 21, 1929 proved an outstanding one on the school calendar, as the students on that day took an active part in the ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone of the new church. The dedication of the new church occurred on November 24.

The first school band was organized in January, 1930, and the following year was presented a silver Loving Cup—the Werlein Trophy. In April, 1932, Sister Mary of St. Albert (Hayes) having been named Mistress of Novices at the General Chapter held by the Congregation in France, left Algiers and was succeeded by Sister Mary of St. Lelia (Lynch), who completed the year as Superior.

May 23, 1932, marked the Golden Jubilee cedebrations of Reverend Father Guinan, S.M., as a Marist. Father Guinan left for a trip to his dear native land, but the Divine Master had other designs on this faithful servant. Before he left American shores he had entered upon his journey to eternity. His death was a great blow to the school children whom he loved so dearly. Every Sunday little children of the Holy Angels sodality were seen weeping at his tomb.

As the scholastic session of 1932 opened, Sister Mary of St. Kevin (Lynch) filled the office of Superioress. The Parish, likewise, possessed a new spiritual father in the person of Reverend Father Hayes, S.M.

The sad news of the sudden death of beloved Archbishop William Shaw on November 2, 1934, came as a blow to all who had learned to love his amiable character, especially the little ones to whom he ever showed great kindness. His loss was deeply felt.

It was in 1934 that the Carnival organization for children, "The Krewe of Nor" first made its appearance. Each year since then (excluding the war years when Carnival festivities were banned) Holy Name of Mary School has taken an active part, sponsoring a float in the annual parade. In order of appearance, these floats were entitled "Clio," "Patio Royal," "Queen Louise," "Christmas Joys," "Baldpate," and "America's Most Interesting City."

May 10, 1935 witnessed the Golden Jubilee celebration for a revered friend and former pastor, the Very Reverend Thomas J. Larkin, S.M., who had labored so long and zealously among the people of Algiers. Right Reverend Monsignor Peter M. H. Wynhoven's address upon this occasion summed up so beautifully the life-work of Father Larkin that it was quoted **verbatim:**[2]

> Because Father Larkin felt, and was affected, proved that he had a heart. That was what made him such a wonderful priest. His understanding, his love for children! He looked upon a little child as the pure image of the Creator and it inspired him to give to that little one, as he did for every last one in his parish, all of his affection and interest and zeal for its soul. Sometimes priests, and sometimes parents, take children too much for granted. We do not look upon the child as a gift from heaven, as a little soul that is to be returned to its Creator beautiful and pure. We are always worried about other things. But we should center ourselves in that little soul with all the love of a heart and I have never seen a priest who did it more admirably, more touchingly, more sincerely than good Father Tom.
>
> He loved his men. Again, a good many of us priests worry about getting the women and children to come to church and be dutiful, and still how silly is that if we only would reason that we should be more interested in our men, for we would be putting down a foundation in our Parish that would rear a building that would last. If our fathers and husbands are dutiful Christians, we do not have to worry about the wives and children, because they will follow Dad's example. We may do everything in the line of education, if the father, the head of the family, doesn't set a good example at home, organization and education in most cases will be futile—the little ones, the grown young daughters and the grown young sons will look to father more than to anyone else.
>
> Again he was a lover of his confreres. Always, he had an open and kind heart for any brother priest. It was always a joy to go to his house for he had a broad Irish smile welcoming you. And above all he loved the priest as "another Christ." He realized that every sincere priest should spend his efforts on this important work, and be on the lookout at all times to bring young men to the altar of God. To watch for the "spark" of a

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[2] Transcription from shorthand of Monsignor Wynhoven's tribute to Very Reverend Thomas J. Larkin, S.M., May 10, 1935.

> vocation and to take hold of that lad, surround him with safeguards, interest him at all times so that one day he could approach the altar as a priest of God—these were the methods Father Tom used. Every sincere priest should have at least two Levites approach the altar of God. It should be every priest's ambition to have at least two approach the altar so that the work of the Church will continue to flourish and increase. What did Father Tom do? Today, there are standing at the altar of God almost twenty priests that went into His sacred ministry through Father Tom's kindness, his influence, his solicitude; and it is a beautiful thought Father Tom can have that his mission, his work, can continue through these boys, these young men in the ministry. This is the thought I give you today—that your work especially in this way will last until the end of the world.
>
> Father Tom is now declining; it is the sunset of his life. What he desires most is peace and happiness. That is what you can give him by your conduct of life, by your Christian example, by your sincerity as Catholics devoted to God. If he sees that, his heart will swell with pride; he will feel especially assured when the time comes that his Maker will call him he can go to Him with confidence, because he will hear the words on Christ's' Own lips: "Well done, my good and faithful son, Father Tom!"[3]

May 16, 1935, was the joyous occasion when, in colorful procession and amid much joy, the entire city welcomed the new Archbishop, the Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D. Within two weeks of his arrival in New Orleans, Archbishop Rummel favored Algiers with a visit, when he administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to over 300 candidates.

But the sunshine of joy was not to last. On February 23, 1938, Very Reverend Father Larkin's death filled all hearts with grief. Algiers had lost its best and staunchest friend, one who shared its joys and bore its sorrows. His death was felt keenly by all, especially the Marianites, for in Father Larkin they had always possessed a true friend and a loving Father.

With the opening of the scholastic session of 1938, Sister Mary of St. Kevin (Lynch) was replaced by Sister Mary of St. Theresa (McDonald), Sister Mary of St. Theresa had, in former years, been a teacher in Holy Name of Mary School, so on her return to the school as its Superioress in 1938 she received a cordial welcome. Reverend Father Hayes, S.M., who had been Pastor for six years, was also changed, and Very Reverend Edward P. McGrath, S.M.

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3 Shorthand transcription of Monsignor Wynhoven's tribute to Very Reverend Thomas J. Larkin, S.M., May 10, 1935, Holy Name of Mary Church, Algiers.

(later Provincial Superior of the Marists), a former Pastor, returned to Algiers.

The year of 1938 was that of the never-to-be-forgotten Eucharistic Congress. Preparations were carried out with zeal and enthusiasm. The children, especially, entered wholeheartedly into the spirit of this Eighth National Eucharistic Congress, and did their utmost to make the event the most glorious in the history of New Orleans. The success of the Congress was their reward for their generous efforts.

The scholastic session 1933-1939 was brought to a close by the graduation of one of the school's largest classes. Eighty pupils received certificates of promotion to High School.

Through the kindness of the pastor, the Very Reverend Edward P. McGrath, S.M., the entire convent was screened during the summer vacation, and other needed improvements made.

In September, 1940, a long-cherished dream of Father McGrath was realized in the opening of the Academic High School. In 1943, a visit from the Supervisor of Louisiana Schools proved that the High-school curricula and standards were satisfactory, and the Holy Name of Mary High School was added to the list of state-accredited and approved schools. Great was the joy of the Sisters when they read the letter from the Supervisor of Louisiana Schools approving Holy Name of Mary High School.

Interest in the missions was stimulated by the organization of the Peter Chanel Unit of the Catholic Student Mission Crusade with Sister Mary of St. Leo (Gavell) as Moderator. After five years of mission work with this unit, Sister Mary of St. Leo left for the missions of India, and the children of the school were proud that their Moderator was the one chosen from among the Marianites to be the first from Louisiana Province to go to India.

Patriotic and civic enterprises always found prominent place in the school program. During the World War II, the pupils showed great patriotic enthusiasm in selling bonds, collecting waste paper and waste fats. Several times the office of Civilian Defense awarded an honor banner to the school as a reward for attaining first place among the city schools in collecting waste fats.

May 31, 1944 marked a very memorable day in the history of the school as its first High School graduation was held. Twenty girls and five boys received their diplomas. The Graduation Mass was celebrated by Very Reverend Edward P. McGrath, S.M. while His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., presided in the sanctuary.

In September, 1944, Reverend William A. Maguire, S.M. succeeded Very Reverend Father McGrath as Pastor. Father Maguire's interest in the education of youth was immediately shown when he and three of his assistants undertook the teaching of religion daily in the High-School classes. Annually, special care for the spiritual welfare of the students who are soon to go into the world is taken by providing the sodalists' retreat, which all High-School students attend.

Athletic competitions, in which Holy Name of Mary pupils have engaged, have proven that the school is not failing in developing physical fitness and sportsmanship in its pupils. Several Catholic School Athletic League Trophies have been awarded both the Grade and High-School divisions.

The efforts through the sixty years of the school's existence have been to maintain a well-balanced curriculum while striving always to inculcate in the pupils the knowledge and love of God Who is the Beginning and the End of all things here and in eternity.

Sister Mary of St. Raphael (Gillis) replaced Sister Mary of St. Theresa (McDonald,) as Superioress in 1946, and after devoting a year at Holy Name of Mary School, where she, too, had taught previously, was assigned to the New Orleans Provincial Council.

In 1947 Sister Mary of St. Theresa (McDonald) returned as Superioress of Holy Name of Mary School, and is continuing the guidance of the work of education she so zealously began nine years ago.

From the fifty-two eager young faces that greeted the first Marianite Sisters in Algiers in 1888, there is quite a range of difference in the slightly over nine hundred that greet their teachers as each scholastic session repeats itself. The record of Holy Name of Mary School is that if a work courageously attempted and nobly accomplished with the aid of grace from God. As the Congregation of the Marianite Sisters in Louisiana celebrates its centenary in 1948, many will look back at the sixty years its members have spent themselves in the school in Algiers, and breathe a hopeful prayer that when the centenary in Algiers occurs it will present a record no less glorious.

The teachers and alumni of the school's three-score years will unite in spirit around the altar of the Holy Sacrifice during the Congregation's Centennial celebrations, and by their inspiration urge the living faculty and alumni to carry on Holy Name of Mary's sacred mission to the consummation of its centennial.

SPIRITUAL SERVICE IN THE RANKS OF THE MARIANITES
ALGIERS, LA.

1. Sister Mary of St. Rose de Lima	Alexandrine Trepagnier
2. Sister Mary of St. Faustina	Edna Houston

3. Sister Mary of St. Mathilde	Anne Aucoin
4. Sister Mary of St. Rita	Mary Agnes Colbert
5. Sister Mary of St. Julius	Gertrude Colbert
6. Sister Mary of St. Francis de Sales	Marie Cecile Dunn
7. Sister Mary of St. Simon	Marie Chauvin
8. Sister Mary of St. Georgia	Edeze Veronique Froisy
9. Sister Mary of St. Anselm	Odessa Brechtel
10. Sister Mary of St. Margaret (Cortona)	Virginia Becnel
11. Sister Mary of St. Barbara	Hilda Andersen
12. Sister Mary of St. Loyola	Mary Haggerty
13. Sister Mary Lourdes	Helen Dorsey
14. Sister Mary of St. John the Evangelist	June Sutherland
15. Sister Mary Chanel	Flossie Laskey
16. Sister Mary of St. Antonine	Marie Elise Talbot
17. Sister Mary of St. Catherine Siena	Vivian Coulon
18. Sister Mary of St. Frances Cabrini	Myrle Shields
19. Sister Mary of St. Eleanor	Joyce Strehle
20. Sister Mary of St. Eusebius	Audrey Strassel
21. Sister Mary Conseula	Gertrude Champagne

RESIDENTS OF ALGIERS AND HOLY NAME OF MARY STUDENTS WHO HAVE BECOME RELIGIOUS OF OTHER COMMUNITIES

1. Sister M. Gertrude of St. Theresa of Jesus, D.C. (Flavia McKernan)
2. Sister M. Magdalene of Pazzi, Incarnate Word (Katherine Twickler)
3. Sister M. Charlotta, S.S.N.D. (Ollie Hendricks)
4. Sister M. Tarcisius, Sister of the Most Holy Sacrament (Gladys d' Aquin)
5. Sister M. Bernardine, Sister of the Most Holy Sacrament (Vivian Breaux)
6. Sister Elizabeth, Sister of Charity, (Cora Shields)
7. Sister Marie, Sister of Charity, (Rose Eleanor Breitling)
8. Sister M. Agnes, Sister of Charity, (Maxine Kessler)
9. Sister Vera Marie, O.S.U., (Dolores Wingerter)
10. Sister M. Julianna, Marist Sister, (Florabel Roper)
11. Sister Mary Xaxier, Sisters of the Third Order of Mt. Carmel, (Bridget Moynihan)
12. Sister Mary Angela, Sisters of the Third Order of Mt. Carmel, (Catherine Moynihan)
13. Sister M. Camille de Lellis, Sisters of the Third Order of Mt. Carmel, (Victoria Reese)
14. Sister M. Augustin, Sisters of the Third Order of Mt. Carmel, (Mary Carr)

VOCATIONS TO THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD AND BROTHERHOOD

1. Reverend James Joyce, S.M.
2. Reverend Robert Ripp, S.M.
3. Reverend Conroy Kline, S.M.
4. Reverend Peter F. O'Donnell, S.J.
5. Reverend Malcolm Strassel
6. Reverend Gerrets, S.M.

Brother Anselm Godwin, F.S.C. (John Emmet O'Dowd)

ST. CECILIA SCHOOL

THE MARIANITE SISTERS of Holy Cross had been established in New Orleans a half century when St. Cecilia's School was opened. In 1897 Most Reverend Francis Janssens carved the Parish of St. Cecilia out of the parishes of St. Maurice and St. Vincent de Paul. As Reverend John Rieter, assistant at the Cathedral, had been assigned by His Lordship as director of a home for boys maintained in this rapidly developing lower section of New Orleans, it was but natural that Father Rieter should be named Pastor of the newly-created parish of St. Cecilia.[1] Mr. Roger Baudier, in his history of the **Catholic Church in Louisiana**,[2] gives the early history of St. Cecilia Church:

> A small church was built on Poland and St. Claude Avenue; meantime, Mass was said at the home of Dr. J. Howe of England, the home being located on Chartres and Bartholomew streets. On March 15, 1897, Archbishop Janssens blessed the new church and on that day stated to the Pastor that he felt that he had chosen the wrong site for the church. A few months later, the property of Mrs. Thomas Wiltz, at North Rampart and France streets, was bought for $10,000, and on this site the church was built later.

It was Archbishop Chapelle who instructed Reverend John Rieter, to build the church and school on the property purchased by the parish on North Rampart and France streets. Father Rieter carried out His Grace's recommendations, and was delegated by the Archbishop to bless the new buildings.[3]

Within two years, Reverend John Rieter invited the Marianite Sisters to take charge of St. Cecilia School. "In 1915 the great September storm destroyed both the church and school, so a temporary building was erected for Church services; meanwhile Mass was said in the presbytery.[4]" The Marianites extended accommodation to St. Cecilia's, and classes were carried on in a frame build-

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1-2 Baudier, Roger, **Catholic Church in Louisiana**, pp. 481-482.

[3] Legend has it that Father Rieter called the new parish Saint Cecilia because he was once lost in the catacombs of Rome, and, finding himself before her tomb implored her help, promising if she discovered to him the way out of the catacombs he would name a Church in her honor, should he ever become Pastor of a new Church.

[4] Roger Baudier, **Catholic Church in Louisiana**, pp. 562-563.

ing on the campus of the Academy of the Holy Angels, although St. Cecilia's functioned independently of Holy Angels.

Archbishop Blenk in 1916 approved the plan for a new church to be built in Tudor Gothic style, with massive concrete foundations. Had it not been for the World War, the church would have been completed within a year. Several years passed before the superstructure arose and it was on June 23, 1923, that the cornerstone was blessed by Archbishop Shaw. At Midnight Mass, Christmas, 1923, the Pastor, delegated by the Archbishop, dedicated the new church in the presence of 1200 people.

For a while the old temporary church building was used as a school, until finally a modern brick school was erected. Reverend John Rieter died in 1938, and was succeeded by Right Reverend Monsignor Joseph Wester, who had accomplished much for the parish of the Immaculate Conception at Marrero.

Right Reverend Monsignor Wester has kept the school standards high, and, having once served as CYO Director for the city units, provides special athletic activities for the pupils of St. Cecilia. The parish boasts of having the honor of being the third parish branch of the Holy Name Society. Other flourishing sodalities are those of St. Aloysius, Holy Angels, Children of Mary, and Holy Childhood. The mission spirit of the students is high, an average of one hundred pagan babies being ransomed annually from the sums raised by their daily sacrifices.

The 1947-1948 enrollment of the school totalled 581 pupils, with a faculty of thirteen religious and one lay teacher. The school had long outgrown its facilities. In the summer and fall of 1947 Right Reverend Monsignor Wester erected a $22,000 structure to serve the over-flow of students. In this new building is also housed a splendidly-operated cafeteria in which the pupils are served a good, substantial warm meal at Noon, by a devoted group of mothers who alternate in servicing the cafeteria.

The Marianite Sisters, as well as the parishioners, rejoiced when Reverend Joseph Wester was appointed Domestic Prelate in 1947 with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor.

The following Marianites have served St. Cecilia's as Principals:

Sister Mary of St. Lydia (Cecile Hare)
Sister Mary of St. Eusebia (Mary Barbeusse)
Sister Mary of St. Stanislaus (Margaret Brennan)
Sister Mary of St. Columbkille (Mary O'Riordan)
Sister Mary of St. Theresa (Helen McDonald)
Sister Mary of St. Madeleine Sophie (Wilhelmina Hebert)
Sister Mary of St. Imelda (Theresa Voelker)

Though St. Cecilia's is fifty years in existence, its faculty resides at the Marianite Provincial House distant by seven blocks from the school. Like the seven other Marianite Parochial schools in New Orleans, St. Cecilia is an independent unit, under the supervision of its local Pastor and under the direction of Reverend Henry C. Bezou, Archdiocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools.

St. Cecilia's Banner of Spiritual Service for Christ

As in other Marianite parochial schools, there were boys and girls at St. Cecilia's who often wished to be admitted to the inner circle of Our Lord's most intimate friends. They had heard the Divine Spouse whisper in their heart of love, of sacrifice, and of a life of perfection. They gave their wholehearted consent to the proposal of their Divine Lover and became priests and Sisters, choosing the religious community in which they hoped to serve God most faithfully.

Those who entered the Holy Priesthood:

Reverend Ambrose Serrano, O.S.B.
Reverend Charles Lashley, S.J.

Seminarians

Thomas Barosse
Laurent Ruiz
Bernard Suhor

Those who entered the Sisterhood:

Sister Mary Michael, O.S.C. (Poor Clare)	Georgia Ryan
Sister Mary Augustine, S.S.J.	Cora Sutcamp
Sister Mary Joseph, I.C.	Rita Voelker
Sister Mary of St. Imelda, M.S.C.	Theresa Voelker

ST. RITA SCHOOL

THE MARIANITES labored long in the old Third District hoping to tread new paths in the upper sections of New Orleans. Later on the Community opened three schools which are now thriving foundations, the Parochial Schools of St. Rita, the Incarnate Word, and St. Agnes. These are co-educational grammer schools, which meet the requirements of the Archdiocesan Board of Education and the State Department at Baton Rouge.

St. Rita's Parochial School was opened October 2, 1923. Sister Mary of St. Denis (Mary Margaret Kelly), the first Superior, accompanied by Sister Mary of St. Ursula and Sister Mary of St. Petronilla, assembled the children in the church. After assisting at Holy Mass, one hundred or more registrants were graded. The first school and Sisters' home were ideally located in a splendid residential section of the city at Pine and Broad Place. Compactly built, the school had for auditorium space the lower floor, with recreation hall and dressing rooms to the rear; the second floor was crossed by a wide hall with classrooms on the right and the Sisters' apartments to the left. This early arrangement at St. Rita's showed the foresight of the Pastor, the Reverend Patrick Walshe (now deceased) who expected his parish to grow. Within the space of a few years, in 1929, a new Sisters' home was acquired, and the entire school building used for school purposes. The Sisters' new residence, located at 7231 Pine Street, is within a stone's throw of the church and school. It is both modern and well equipped.

St. Rita's is a progressive parish. A cursory glance proves this. The parish was created in 1921 by the late Archbishop John W. Shaw. Through the efforts of Father Walshe, the church, school, and Sisters' residence now form an important parish group. Being a brilliant orator and an interested civic worker, Father Walshe, a native of Ireland, became an outstanding clergyman in New Orleans. Untiringly, he marshalled his forces. Ceaselessly did he champion the Catholic cause, particularly in his timely, stirring articles in the **Morning Star,** former Diocesan publication, on whose staff he served as Manager. It was with genuine grief that the parishioners of St. Rita's bemoaned his early demise in 1939.

St. Rita's second pastor, a native son (Right Reverend Monsignor William Castel) was named on February 15, 1939, by Archbishop Rummel to replace the Chancellor of the Diocese, Reverend A. Carroll Badeaux, who served as administrator of the parish after the death of Father Walshe. With the new Pastor, came new endeavors, and St. Rita's school and convent have continued to advance. In 1947 after a lapse of 26 years, the Sisters were given permission to have the Most Blessed Sacrament permanently in their convent chapel.

VOCATIONS TO THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD

Jesuit Seminarian—Neil Jarreau
Jesuit Brothers—Stephen Schott, Dennis Lonergan

VOCATIONS TO OTHER RELIGIOUS ORDERS:

Ursuline (Novice)—Ester Redmann, in Religion, Sister Ester, O.S.U.
Sister of Mercy—Marian Becker, in Religion, Sister Frederick, R.S.M.
Missionary Sisters of Mary, Bedford, Massachusetts—Alice Kernan—Sister Mary Benita, S.S.M.

INCARNATE WORD SCHOOL

THE INCARNATE WORD SCHOOL, located in the eighty-third block of Apricot Street, like its nearby neighbor, St. Rita's, opened in the fall of 1923, just one year after Most Reverend John W. Shaw, D.D. had established the parish under the invocation of the Incarnate Word. The first Pastor, Reverend Frederick W. Bosch, a former American Army chaplain, lost no time in assembling a group of church buildings: First the school, then a new church to replace an old chapel, and, finally, a convent.

Father Bosch, realizing that the future success of his parish lay in the religious development of its children, applied for teachers to Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans, then Provincial Superior of the Marianites. A generous response to the appeal was made, and the needed sacrifices entailed by a new foundation courageously undertaken. As there was no Sisters' home at the mission, for three years Sister Mary of St. Lelia (Katherine Lynch) and her companions, in the heat of summer and the cold of winter, on rainy and on sunshiny days made the trip by street car from the convent thirty-five blocks below Canal Street to the new school seventy-one blocks above. They ate cold lunches in a corner of the school basement, and at the end of their day's work, returned to the Mother House downtown. Though discomforts were generally the Sisters' fare, many joys were theirs, and humorous mishaps added to their fun.

Father Bosch was appointed pastor of St. Francis d'Assisi Church in 1925, and the Sisters lost a good friend. Reverend Joseph Pierre replaced him at Incarnate Word. The new pastor of the latter church took immediate steps to provide a Sisters' home. His plans materialized in the fall of 1926. Sister Mary of St. Angela (Carmelite Melanson), Superior, and five other Sisters were the first Marianites to reside at the Incarnate Word Convent.

Success crowned their efforts; societies were organized, and Father Pierre, an enthusiastic exponent of plain chant, boasted that he had the best children's choir in New Orleans. Father Pierre remained pastor until April, 1938, when he was transferred to the Annunciation Church. His successor, Reverend Gerald Rief, provided a more spacious and suitable dwelling for the Sisters at 2717 Cambronne Street.

Much of the success of the Incarnate Word School is due to those who served as Principals:

Sister Mary of St. Lelia (Lynch)
Sister Mary of St. Angela (Carmelite Melanson)
Sister Mary of St. Julius (Gertrude Colbert)

Sister Mary of St. Mathilde (Aucoin)
Sister Mary of St. Francis de Sales (Dunn)
Sister Mary of St. Finbarr (McNamara)

Evidently, a new and even more progressive era has commenced for Incarnate Word School, judging from the activities inaugurated by Father Rief during the past ten years.

Eight young women have given their lives to the service of Almighty God, six of them within the Marianite ranks, and two in other communities:

Sister Mary of St. Mary Magdalen..........Adele Poursine
Sister Mary of St. Martin..........Novella Hecker
Sister Mary of St. David..........Hary Hecker
Sister Mary of St. Anita..........
Miss Lorraine Cella, Marianite Postulant

Those who entered other religious orders were
Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Miss Ruth Cameron
Sisters of Notre Dame, Miss Norris McCormack

There were eleven vocations to the Holy Priesthood:
Reverend Elwood Hecker, S.J.
Reverend Frank Boeshans

Reverend Mr. Frank Donahue, S.J. Reverend Mr. Roy Schilling, S.J. Reverend Mr. Lawrence Heines, S.J. Reverend Mr. Hubert Cousins, S.J. Reverend Mr. John Bileto, C.Ss.R. Reverend Mr. Robert Moran, O.M.I. Reverend Mr. Kermit Trahan Reverend Mr. Earl Perroux Reverend Mr. Emmett Vollenweider	SEMINARIANS

ST. AGNES SCHOOL

ST. AGNES PARISH was originated March 1, 1931, at Manresa Retreat House, Central Avenue and the River Road. On January 20, 1932, St. Agnes was removed from Manresa to the new building, 3410 Jefferson Highway.

Mr. M. Karger donated six lots of ground and the present church building on June 1935, on condition that they be used for a church, school and convent. In 1941, Reverend Moses J. Habeb, realizing the need of a Parochial school, made arrangements with Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial Superior of the Marianites, to provide teachers for the school. Mother brought the little pioneer band to meet the Pastor and to get a glimpse of their future field of labor on August 25, 1941.

With the first Superior of St. Agnes—Sister Mary of St. Isabelle (Rose Daigre)—and her group of pioneer Sisters, Mother Provincial assisted at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at St. Agnes Church. After Mass, some of the parishioners greeted the Sisters and gave them a hearty welcome to the parish.

The doors of St. Agnes' school opened for the first time September 4, 1941 to welcome 190 children, who, together with their parents, were very happy to have the Sisters and a Parochial School in their midst.

During the six years of St. Agnes' existence, the increase in enrollment has been astounding. As Reverend Henry C. Bezou, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, stated, never has such a young parish grown in so few years with such leaps and bounds as has St. Agnes. The capacity enrollment for these six years is 352. The lack of accommodation has obliged the principal to turn away scores of children. This situation has aroused the very laudable desire to make immediate provisions for the erection of a new school building, sufficiently large, to meet present and future needs, and fully equipped with every facility and convenience for carrying out an efficient modern school program.

In September, 1947, Sister Mary of St. Isabelle (Daigre) was transferred to a new Parochial school, the Little Flower School in Arnaudville, and Sister Mary of St. Edmund (Schexnaidre) became Superior of St. Agnes. Sister Mary of St. Edmund introduced a full athletic program in the school, and entered St. Agnes' Volleyball team in the Catholic School Athletic League for the first time. The team was victorious, winning the championship in Volleyball.

St. Agnes' school is mission-minded. The students work wholeheartedly for the ransom of pagan babies, in this way obeying the command of the loving Savior, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

There are three boys from St. Agnes Parish, Jefferson Highway, who are studying for the Holy Priesthood:

Gaston Songy, son of Doctor and Mrs. Gaston Songy, is studying at St. Joseph's Seminary. With him are William Michelet, son of Mr. and Mrs. M. L. Michelet, and Sidney Heider, son of Mr. Sidney J. Heider.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL

LOWER COAST, ALGIERS, LA.

ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL was solemnly blessed on August 24, 1941, and school opened September 4 of the same year with an enrollment of 60 pupils, consisting of Chart, First, Second and Third grades. The faculty then consisted of two Sisters, residing at Holy Name Convent, Algiers, and commuting daily on the bus.

Through the efforts of the devoted Priest, Reverend Leo Marx, S.M., the Sisters have their own convent of St. Joseph, 837 Sumner Street, occupied since September 28, 1947, and are privileged in having the Blessed Sacrament reserved in their convent chapel where they can visit their Eucharistic Lord throughout the day.

The faculty for 1947-1948 session was composed of six Sisters and one lay teacher. The enrollment had increased to 300 pupils.

Sister Mary of St. Ursula (Bailey) is St. Joseph's first Superior.

ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS SCHOOL

WITH THE GROWTH of the Catholic population in the northeastern section of the city of New Orleans, the need of an additional parish became apparent. Accordingly in 1925, St. Mary of the Angels Parish was organized and placed under the direction of the Franciscan Fathers of St. John Baptist Province, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Paralleling the organization of the parish was the erection of a school, the first building to be erected in the new parish unit. The new St. Mary of the Angels School was a substantial one-story frame building having five classrooms and providing for the accommodation of two hundred children. The Sisters of St. Francis of Lafayette, Indiana, were requested to staff the school.

Beginning in August, 1926, with three Sisters and 110 pupils, the enrollment of the school increased rapidly. It soon became necessary to provide more teachers and more classroom space; hence, during the summer of 1930 a frame building near the church was purchased and converted into two classrooms for the Primer and the First Grade.

In the following summer of 1331 a second story was added to the original frame school building. This remodeled cement stucco building then contained eight classrooms and an auditorium. A small room of the stage in the auditorium was furnished as a kitchen and is used throughout the school year by the school cafeteria organization to prepare sandwiches and hot food for the noon lunches. The frame building, which had been purchased the previous year and used for the First Grade, was then rearranged to house the Kindergarten which was introduced into the school for the first time in September, 1931. The 299 pupils enrolled in the school were now being taught by nine Sisters.

By the summer of 1935, the enrollment of the school had again increased to the extent that it became necessary to enlarge classroom facilities. The problem was solved by building a new four-classroom annex located on the southeast section of the school grounds, facing Congress Street. In September, 1935, this annex was dedicated by His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., Archbishop of New Orleans. This neat frame building, large enough to accommodate 200 children, houses the first, second, and third grades. The combined capacity of the three school buildings totaled 550. At this time the enrollment of the school was 509, and the teaching staff had been increased to twelve.

Because of a shortage of teaching Sisters in the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis, the Mother Provincial found it impossible to continue to supply an ever increasing staff for the school at New Orleans. With the close of the school year June 1946, the Sisters of St. Francis discontinued their labors at St. Mary of the Angels. The session of 1945-1946, the school had been staffed partially by Sisters of St. Francis and partially by Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. The Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross assumed entire charge of the school with the session 1946-1947, with Sister Mary of St. Madeleine Sophie, Superior. The scholastic term 1947-1948 showed an enrollment of 715 pupils (370 boys, 345 girls) with a teaching staff of fifteen Sisters.

The school continues to progress as it has done through the years under its long-time Pastor, the Reverend Alcium Kammer, O.F.M., whom the Sisters justly look upon as a father. It has been under the able management of Father Alcuin that St. Mary of the Angels School has become one of the finest Parochial grade schools in New Orleans.

ACADEMY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

NEW ORLEANS

FROM THE HUMBLE BEGINNING of St. Mary's Asylum the work of the Marianites spread up the river to Plaquemine, along bayou banks, out to prairie lands, but oftener did the work of the Marianites spread within the city of its humble beginning.

Near Holy Angels Academy the Parish of St. Vincent de Paul, the third parish to be erected in the city of New Orleans, was thriving.[1] The year 1864 brought to St. Vincent's the Reverend E. J. Foltier as pastor.[2] Five years later, the Marianites were called by Father Foltier to take charge of his school. The days of Reconstruction were not days of prosperity for the city in general, much less for the Faubourg Marigny wherein was situated this parish. Father's letter to the Marianites' Provincial Superior stated conditions as they were. Yet, the Marianites opened St. Vincent's school and kept it open for twelve years until another community, that of the Immaculate Conception Sisters, took over its direction.

An interesting story is related of the way in which one of the outstanding Superiors of St. Vincent de Paul Academy, as the school was then called, treated the War Between the States when she had to cover that section in history class. Mother Mary of St. Modestus (Clark) gently said, "My pupils, I ask that these pages be glued; I will glue them, myself. Should you wish to know the details of that fratricidal conflict, get your fathers and your brothers to tell you. They, better than I, can outline the War of the "Sixties." The books were sealed, and Mother Modestus in her exquisite refinement of charity, soothed the spirit of those bruised souls. Only sympathy and understanding were offered these children of a crushed Southland.

Little wonder is it that one of Mother Mary of St. Modestus' pupils should tender her the tribute[3] she published, as editor of the **Morning Star**, February 1, 1908, upon the death of this beloved teacher. Her pupils who entered the Community treasure her memory.

The twelve years of educational work at St. Vincent's were not in vain. Daughters of students, boys and girls, who attended St. Vincent's Academy in the long ago, now wear the Marianite Habit. Their knowledge of the past, their acquaintance with and tutelage under whom women such as Mother Modestus aided these parents in the training of their children. St. Vincent's is closed, has been closed for many years, but its spirit lives on in the hearts of those who were trained therein.

Those who entered the Marianites' ranks:

Helen Segrave	Sister Mary of St. Bernardine
Anne Marie O'Brien	Sister Mary of St. Seraphia
Marguerite McVicar	Sister Mary of St. Cyprian

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[1] Baudier, op. cit., p. 364.
[2] Ibid., p. 567.
[3] Supra, pp. 109 110.

ST. PATRICK'S SCHOOL

NEW ORLEANS

IT WAS NOT IN the suburbs of the city, but in its very heart that a new convent and parochial school were opened by the Marianites. St. Patrick's Convent was blessed August 27, 1892, by the Most Reverend Francis Janssens, Archbishop of New Orleans, assisted by the Right Reverend Bishop Fitzgerald, Fathers Fallon and Hickey. School opened the first Monday of September, 1892, with an enrollment of 115 pupils. The Chronicles of St. Patrick's Convent are replete with accounts of school activities. A school established in the parish founded by that historic figure, Reverend James Ignatius Mullen, could not be otherwise. A brief sketch of St. Patrick's church will explain its spectacular rise and its present day situation.

St. Patrick's ranks after the ancient St. Louis Cathedral as the most historic and important in the archives of Louisiana,

> For from that seed planted on that April day in 1833, there grew a majestic tree whose branches, reaching far and wide, bore fruit in all portions of the sections, especially in this city of New Orleans, influencing the thought and action of vast congregations of people, and building up within this diocese a great, sturdy body of Catholics, whose fidelity to their faith and to the highest requirements of Christian citizenship have made them a power in the land and given to the Church itself a source of strength and consolation, whose present fruits are visible, whose continued growth teems with the noblest and richest possibilities.[1]
>
> St. Patrick's was erected by Reverend James Ignatius Mullen in 1835, a replica of York Minster. St. Patrick's was the first Church for English-speaking Catholics, not only of the vast Archdiocese of New Orleans, but of that immense territory comprised in the Louisiana Purchase, the first Church for English-speaking Catholics from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes, from the west of Missouri to the Rocky Mountains, and beyond to the Pacific. St. Patrick's marks the growth of the city above Canal Street.

The first Pastor of St. Patrick was the Reverend Adam Kindelon who fell victim of the yellow fever scourge in 1833. Father Kindelon's parish embraced the entire Foubourg Sainte Marie. Father Mullen followed Father Kindelon until the days of Ben Butler's occupancy of New Orleans (1862.) Reverend Fathers Flanagan,

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[1] Morning Star April 18, 1908.

Allen, Fallon, Fitzgerald, Carra, Reverend Carl J. Schutten, have succeeded to the pastorate of St. Patrick Church.

This school was a bit too near the business district for its usefulness lasted less than a decade; yet it cannot be said that St. Patrick's Parochial school had no duty to fulfill. A glance at a partial list of boys and girls trained within St. Patrick's walls, reveals names that stand in prominence today, names of those who realize their duty to the Church and the state, and are fulfilling that duty: Ethel Curren, Ruth McShane, Claire Birrcher, Maurice Duffy, M.D., M. McCaffery, Joe Birrcher, J. Lynch, Francis Goodspeed, W. Finnan. Some of these are enrolled in the Army of Christ, and have proven a credit to their Alma Mater.

Today St. Patrick's is in the center of the business district; yet, like its founder, Father Mullen of old, it bears aloft its noble heritage of Catholic Faith; its doors open wide to welcome those hard pressed by "Midas of old."

ST. PATRICK'S SERVICE BANNER FOR CHRIST

In the Marianites' Ranks:

Sister Mary of St. Veronica	Catherine Fant*
Sister Mary of St. Scholastica	Mary Fant*
Sister Mary of St. Agnes	Johanna Fant*

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART

NEW ORLEANS

> "THE RIGHT DOCTRINE OF JESUS," Father Faber has said, "has in all ages been wrapped up with the true devotion to Mary; and the Mother can be wounded only through the Son. Thus Mary is the heritage of humble and obedient Catholics."[1]

The Marianites, true to their special devotion to Mary in her sorrows, have received this heritage in a very special manner. The Marianite Mother House was justly styled "Notre Dame de Sainte Croix;" their first American foundation at Indiana, "Notre Dame du Lac," the first Louisiana foundation, "St. Mary's." Time and again missions have been opened under the patronage of Our Lady by the Sisters, so it is not surprising to read that in 1874 a new mission was established in the heart of the old French Quarter of New Orleans under the patronage of Notre Dame du Sacre Coeur. On September 1, 1874 the school was opened. On October second the chronicler recorded rather pithily:

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*Deceased.

[1] Thoughts from Father Faber—Reflections for Religious, p. 348.

> These schools (There was an Academy and a Parochial school) are situated in the city of New Orleans on Hospital Street, between Royal and Chartres Streets about one mile and a half from the Provincial House. The Academy, which serves as a residence for the Sisters and a school house at the same time, is a two-story brick building. It is quite comfortable, but rather small, especially the Sisters' apartments. The terms are as follows, that each Sister who teaches will have a salary of four hundred dollars a year and also a furnished dwelling free of rent. The Sisters are paid out of the revenues of the school, which they themselves have the disagreeable task of collecting and the residue, if there should be any, is to be given over to the Reverend Pastor. The Sisters enjoy a great many spiritual advantages which are must better than the transitory goods of this world.

Evidently, Reconstruction days, the period in which the mission was opened, were not so peaceful, for the historian relates:

> On account of the disturbances occasioned by the political affairs, things bear a most gloomy aspect and parents become so disheartened at the discouraging state of affairs that several are withdrawing their children until times change for the better. In consequence of this interruption, and the irregular attendance in both schools, the semi-annual examination did not take place.[2]

Assuredly both parents and the community historian were right in stating local disturbances, but they described them all too mildly. Anyone familiar with the historic background of the times, knows of the government under Warmoth and the bloody battle of September 14, 1874, which gave the White Leaguers control of New Orleans. Federal troops and ships of war were not wanting. Through the outcome of the election of 1876, the President[3] realized that the American people no longer approved of using Federal troops to keep men in office against the will of its citizens.

Politics was not the only cause of alarm to the Marianites in the nineteenth century. An accident, such as a chimney on fire, broke the monotony of cloistered regularity and is styled in the chronicles as "an adventure:"

> We will relate an amusing adventure which took place during a session in this Institution. Some few days before the great festival of Christmas, between five and six o'clock in the afternoon, one of the Academy chimneys was on fire and threatened imme-

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[2] Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, **Chronicles**, House of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, New Orleans.

[3] General Grant was President.

diate danger. The Sisters were terrified, and, to add to their distress one of them had been very ill in the same apartment where the fire broke out. They knew that their own feeble exertions were useless on such an occasion, and, besides, there were only three Sisters at home at the time. Being perfect strangers in that part of the city, they were quite at a loss what to do. Finally, they had recourse to the Reverend Pastor, who, though rather busy at the time hearing confessions, very kindly came to their assistance accompanied by some twenty seminarians and several of his domestics.

We doubt not that such a procession attracted much attention as it was headed by the Vicar General and was destined for the convent. Soon many others followed them, partly to gratify their curiosity. On arriving at the Academy gate, Reverend Father halted to station some of his servants there, in order to prevent the crowd from entering the convent, knowing they would be more likely to create disorder and confusion than to render service. This arrangement completed, he and his ecclesiastics entered the cloister, but to their great satisfaction the fire had been extinguished by Sister Mary of St. Albert before their arrival.

Strange to say, one of the Sisters had been in the chapel, making her adoration during the above incident, seemingly unconscious of what was going on, when all of a sudden she heard several footsteps running up the stairs with great speed; so she opened the door to see what was the matter, and to her surprise saw the hall full of people. You may imagine her embarrassment at seeing so many persons and not knowing the object of their visit. Her first thought was that the Sister who had been ill was dying, especially when she saw the priests; therefore, she went to see, and on the way met Sister Mary of St. Albert whose strange appearance revealed the whole secret for she was pretty well ornamented with soot. This rather remarkable adventure was the subject of recreation for several days in this little community.

Trials without number visited this mission. Among them was the yellow fever epidemic of 1879. It affected the attendance so much at the school that it had to be closed a few weeks after its opening in September. School was reopened, however, on November 4, 1879. It continued the even tenor of its way until the dawn of the twentieth century. One thing which the files of the convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart yielded—an act of consecration of the Sisters of that house to the Sacred Heart, dated

September 2, 1878—which explains the blessings and the consolations enjoyed by the faculty of this school throughout the quarter-century of work there for the Divine Master.

From the Alumnae of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Mary Berbeusse later entered the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross Congregation and became Sister Mary of St. Eusebia, M.S.C.[4]

ST. CHARLES SCHOOL

PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

IN 1869 SEVERAL MARIANITE SISTERS gave their services to St. Charles School, Pensacola, Florida. They continued until 1871, when they were recalled by their Major Superiors. The Pastor of St. Charles School desired a community of Sisters who would be independent of their Provincial House and attached solely to their local Mission. It was with regret that St. Charles School was closed.

Just ten years after this, August 31, 1881, the Marianites gave their services to St. Mary's School at Carrollton, New Orleans. The convent was known as St. Joseph's. Saintly Father Renee Vallee had asked for the Sisters to direct his French School. For the five years of its existence there were many misfortunes that befell the mission: cyclone, poverty, and hardships were a few of the trials the Sisters suffered. The chronicler states that so poorly was the house furnished, the Pastor in his excessive charity completely dismantled his own home by giving his furniture, piece by piece, to the Sisters. It is also related that, at one time, some months after a cyclone, the Sisters possessed one fork. Turns were taken to use it until the Provincial Superior arrived.

Just twenty-three years after the St. Mary's foundation at Carrollton, another was made at Jennings, Louisiana. The Marianites gave this time not only services but also property. On August 31, 1904, a little band of pioneer Sisters, five in number, arrived in Jennings for the opening of St. Henry's School.

Notwithstanding the fact that the school opened on September 5, 1904, and flourished for twelve years, it was closed. Misfortunes followed one after the other. In 1905 it was Yellow Fever; in 1907, a terrific storm; in 1912, an epidemic of scarlatina that necessitated the closing of the school.

The very last "giving" by the Marianites was to the newly-erected Parish of Happy Jack. In 1937, the Marianites accepted the mission of Our Lady of Lourdes. Unfortunately, racial strife made the school attendance an impossibility.

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[4] (Deceased).

BISHOP'S RESIDENCE
107 South Union St.
Natchez, Miss.

July 21, 1947.

Mother Mary Xavier, M.S.C., Provincial
3500 St. Claude Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear Mother Mary Xavier:

At this happy time when you are about to celebrate the completion of one hundred years of service in Louisiana I send you warm greetings and best wishes that God may continue to favor your good Sisters with His special blessing.

During these hundred years of service the uncounted prayers and sacrifices of your Sisters—the numberless souls who have been led to heaven by them—are known only to God.

We are happy to have your Sisters in our diocese, where they have been a source of edification by reason of their zeal and fine religious spirit. May God bless the Marianite Sisters of the Holy Cross and help them to grow in numbers and in grace to carry on even a greater work in the future for the glory of God and the good of souls.

Assuring you of a remembrance in my prayers, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

✝ *Most Rev. R. O. Gerow,*
Bishop of Natchez.

MOST REV. R. O. GEROW, D.D.
Bishop of Natchez, Miss.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ALONG THE GULF COAST

OCEAN SPRINGS, Mississippi is situated on a headland with grayish-blue water on three sides, and it is naturally endowed with immense moss-draped oaks, great shaded blocks of pines and gardens of sub-tropical flowers. The town possesses a quiet charm that the residents have been content to enjoy rather than to improve.[1] It was selected as Sieur d'Iberville's fort in 1699, and one hundred and eighty-eight years afterwards, in 1887, by the Marianite Sisters' Provincial Superior as a mission site and summer home for the Sisters.

With the Gulf of Mexico on the south, the Bay of Biloxi on the west, and Fort Bayou on the North, the town is divided into two parts. The outlying boulevard, which swings along the beach front, is lined in well-constructed houses. Many were built by persons who thought to make their places summer homes, but remained as permanent residents. Here are many streets of crushed white seashells, and the appearance of even the smallest house is enhanced by a garden of azaleas and hydrangeas.

Yet natural beauty and easy way of life are only half of Ocean Springs' charm. Its history winds through years, falling into two main divisions: As "Old Biloxi," site of Fort de Maurepas, it was to the Lower Mississippi Valley what Plymouth and Jamestown were to the Atlantic Coast. Little progress was made until the early 1800's when the location had a renascence. The new town named Lynchbury Springs, after a Mr. Lynch who conducted a business in the locality, came into being in 1853. In 1854 the settlement took the name of Ocean Springs from the Ocean Springs Hotel, which was then widely known throughout the lower south.

In this picturesque town, about eighty-five miles from New Orleans, the Marianites arrived October 9, 1887. The School of St. Alphonsus was opened October 17 with an enrollment of 32 pupils. For sixty-one years, excepting the few years after the World War I, when the mission was temporarily closed, these Sisters have labored unceasingly against all odds. Financial problems, great as they have been, have not been the heaviest of the heavy crosses so bravely carried this half century by the Sisters missioned in Ocean Springs.

Optimism and self-sacrifice seem to have been, and still are, the characteristic traits of each band of Sisters whether they belonged to the "gay nineties" or the bustling twentieth century.

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[1] Guide to the Gulf Coast.

Most Reverend Francis Janssens, Bishop of Natchez Diocese, paid the school a visit in November, 1887, seemed pleased with the children, and promised to do what he could to promote the good work which had been started among them. He proved his interest by buying books for the poor children and providing rewards for excellent school work.

The continuity of natural charm has woven into the life of Ocean Springs a pleasing simplicity. There were also spiritual advantages which encouraged and sustained the Sisters, though the temporal prospects of the school were not very promising. The frightful cyclone of 1894 proved very disastrous, depriving some of the people of their only means of support. Not being able to pay tuition, they kept their children from school altogether; consequently, this marred the success of the school to a certain extent.

In 1899 the chronicler noted slight-improvements: "The little school house has been ceiled, renovated, and white-washed. New desks have been substituted for the old shabby, cumbrous ones. There is a fluctuating group of music and needlework pupils."

The Sisters suffered considerably from exposure to the inclemencies of the weather, especially during the winter in going to and from the school, distant about four blocks from the convent, but all kept fairly well, and remarked that doubtless Divine Providence had taken special care of them for their health fared even better than when they were more comfortably located and provided for.

In the month of June, 1933, Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial Superior, called upon Reverend J. H. Chauvin,[2] the Pastor of St. Alphonsus regarding the school contract expiring that month. Financial depression was widespread everywhere in 1933, so the parishioners were not able to renew their contract, financially. Mother Provincial's noble sentiments would not permit her to close the mission when there were souls to be saved, and the Faith to be preserved. Reverend Father Chauvin was greatly pleased, and promised to do his part in helping the Sisters financially, a promise which he has faithfully kept.

Conditions at St. Alphonsus have changed greatly since that ninth of October, 1887, when Sister Mary of St. Patrick, Sister Mary of St. Anthony, and Sister Mary of St. Cesaria, under the kindly care of Mother M. and St. Magdalen de Pazzi arrived at their new convent home in Ocean Springs. Though the enrollment has seldom exceeded 85 pupils, the number in attendance during the 1947-1948 session, there is consolation in the thought that at least these are receiving a Catholic education.

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[2] Canon Chauvin.

May 24, 1940, proved a gala day for Ocean Springs. The Sisters felt greatly privileged and highly honored by having one of their former pupils return to Ocean Springs to say his first Mass. Reverend William Hewson celebrated Mass in the convent chapel, afterwards giving his special blessing to those assisting at the Mass. When Father Hewson celebrated his first Solemn High Mass he was assisted by Reverend Father Michael J. Larkin, S.M., as Archpriest, Reverend Father O'Neil as deacon, and Reverend Mr. Neymeier as subdeacon. Reverend Father Entz, S.J. from Mobile preached the sermon. Mother Mary Xavier graciously permitted the Sisters' choir from the Provincial House to go to Ocean Springs to sing the Mass in Gregorian chant. After Mass, breakfast was served to the Reverend Clergy and Brothers of the Sacred Heart who had come for the occasion.

One of the outstanding advantages of the session 1942-43 noted by the chronicler was that of Teachers' meetings organized by Very Reverend Monsignor Goeffrey O'Connell, Ph.D., Superintendent of the Catholic Schools in Mississippi. These meetings were held every six weeks at Sacred Heart School, Biloxi. Their objective was that of raising the standard of teaching methods in the Catholic schools, and of giving special aid to delinquent children in the grammar grades. The Sisters alternated in reporting on various phases of their school work. Two professors, Doctors Lindsay and Martin, were employed to give lectures, and were most generous in giving the Sisters all the services within their power. Much useful information was gained by contact with the different communities, for through this medium, class demonstrations were given, materials and projects on the present-day industries were obtained from different sources which proved very helpful in the classwork during the year.

Reverend Father Richard of Siena College, Memphis, Tennessee, gave the Sisters of the Natchez diocese an excellent demonstration lesson in Religion October 23, 1943. Much useful information was derived through observing his methods. On April 8, 1944 at the teachers' meeting called by Very Reverend Monsignor Goeffrey O'Connell, Doctor Foran, Professor at Catholic University, Washington, D. C., gave a lecture advocating the distribution of tests throughout the schools of the Mississippi diocese. Stanford, Metropolitan, and Kuhlman-Andersen tests were distributed from April 14-18 with the exclusion of all other branches of study on those days. Upon completion, these tests were forwarded to Doctor O'Connell and the results reported to Doctor Foran. Favorable reports and remarks were received from the secretary in Washington, D. C. upon the work done by the pupils.

May 5, 1944, Reverend Joseph Holland was replaced by Reverend Francis Deignan. The new Pastor immediately began to work for the erection of a new school, a dream which is soon to be realized as the session 1947-1948 witnessed the drafting of the architect's plans. The building fund has been accumulated rapidly through the earnest and loyal co-operation of the parishioners.

September 8, 1944, the Birthday of Our Blessed Lady, marked the entrance of the first postulant from Ocean Springs in the Marianite Congregation, who later received the name in religion of that of her Reverend brother (Father Hewson), Sister Mary of St. William.

Through the untiring efforts and self-sacrifice of a little band of men in Ocean Springs, the convent home of the Sisters received a new coat of paint, these generous workers contributing labor and material at their own expense. The Sisters feel deeply indebted to these gentlemen who so generously spent themselves for the welfare of the Marianites.

The Sodality of Our Blessed Mother and the mission project of ransoming pagan babies through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith are two outstanding Catholic activities of the school. Each year, Mr. Harry McGhee, Superintendent of the Mississippi schools, accompanied by four state supervisors visits St. Alphonsus School. After examing the records, the grounds, and visiting the classrooms, these State Supervisors express satisfaction annually at the progress observed since their last visit.

Aside from educational pursuits, the little Convent of St. Theresa, with its broad porch, its small, though humble chapel, has offered sanctuary to many a worn and fatigued Marianite. Like their Divine Masters, the Sisters find retreat, comfort and courage here. They watch from their convent porch the beautiful sunsets across the waters of Lake Pontchartrain, and find peace in the dear little chapel nearby where they can kneel, as Mary of Bethany did, at their Master's feet. In May, 1945, this little chapel was adorned with a fine altar equipped with tabernacle and handsome candlesticks and crucifix. Two pedestals for "side altars" were also given by the generous donor, Mr. Phelan of Beaumont, Texas, to whom the Sisters feel they owe a deep debt of gratitude for providing Our Eucharistic King with a more fitting place in which to dwell.

Superiors of St. Theresa's Convent, Ocean Springs:
Sister Mary of St. Patrick (1887-
Sister Mary of St. Julius (Colbert) 1928-
Sister Mary of St. Modestus (Sheehy) 1930-
Sister Mary of St. Julius (Colbert) 1936-
Sister Mary of St. Aurelia (Rhorer) 1942-1948

Two religious vocations gleaned from St. Alphonsus' School were:

Reverend William Hewson, Assistant at St. Francis Xavier Church, New Orleans;

Sister Mary of St. William, M.S.C. Mary Hewson.

PART FOUR

THE DIFFUSING RAYS OF HOLY CROSS

"That every prayer and work of ours . . . ."

CHAPTER TWELVE

IN THE LAND OF ACADIAN EXILE

"TO GATHER UP the raveled threads of the strange stories of the lives of the people that reclaimed the Attakapas country, to catch their fleeting traditions and fireside histories and hand them down to posterity, is worthy the ambition of any man."[1] These people were simple and unostentatious; they came here, many of them, not from choice, but from a force they could not resist.[2]

Simple and unostentatious also were the Marianites who came to Southwest Louisiana, not from choice but from a force they could not and would not resist, the call of the Divine Master to reap the harvest of souls in the Attakapas country.

In Southwest Louisiana, comprising 3,000,000 acres of fertile, tillable land, in the city of Opelousas (the seat of St. Landry Parish) is located the second permanent country mission of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross—the Academy of the Immaculate Conception.

Located about 60 miles from the Gulf of Mexico, Opelousas' climate is mild and uniform. It was in this section that the fierce Attakapas Indians (man eaters) dwelled, and there, tradition tells us, these Attakapas became so aggressive that the neighboring tribes of Choctaws, the Alabamans, and the Opelousas formed a league for the purpose of resisting them, and of repelling their inroads and attacks. The neighboring tribes were victorious; the Attakapas were almost annihilated, and the conquered territory was divided among the victors.

Prior to 1700 Opelousas was simply an Indian village. In or about 1760 the site was so favorably considered that it was called **Poste des Opelousas et des Attakapas.** In 1765 it was chosen for settlement by the **Acadian exiles.**[3] It passed later into the hands of the French and then into the possession of the United States. The Spanish did not colonize this section extensively, but after the French came, the fame of the beautiful prairie section of southwest Louisiana spread, and many French families emigrated to this section, where their descendants still live. Migration also occurred from the Northern and Eastern states, and today the population is cosmopolitan, including representatives from half of the states in the Union, but people of French descent predominate.[4] Here, too, we find the humble Marianite.

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[1] William Henry Perrin, Editor of Southwest, Louisiana.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Roger Baudier, op. cit.

In this beautiful Acadian exile, lazy bayous wander under beds of azure water hyacinths and irises. It is the home of the oleander, the mock orange, the towering cypress tree, and forms part of the famous **Azalea Trail.**

Success in this section was to come to the Sisters only after they had tasted the vinegar and gall of Calvary. The crosses and discouragements incidental to all movements undertaken for God's honor and glory were not wanting to the Sisters who formed the first faculty of the Immaculate Conception Academy, which was opened in Opelousas in 1858. The Sisters humbly bore their cross as successive superiors were recalled; Sisters Mary of the Angels, Mary of the Passion, Mary of the Desert, and a Sister of Holy Cross from the Canadian Province, whose name is not recorded, all shared in the establishing of this foundation.

Alas, no sooner were all adjustments happily made when serious trouble arose and threatened the very existence of the Immaculate Conception Academy. War and the consequent marching of soldiers through the town disturbed the quiet of this peaceful little community. On April 6, 1861, with the approval of the Superior General, the academy was closed; however, it was not until the beginning of August that the Sisters actually locked the doors to leave for the Provincial House in New Orleans with no thought of ever returning to this little mission. Opelousas once more became a military post. Camp Hamilton, located there, was the scene of Confederate activities.[5]

When the War of the Secession ended, and life became more normal, it was deemed advisable to reopen the academy, but this proved to be a difficult undertaking because Communities in Louisiana were impoverished and, receiving only a few subjects during the period of war, were reluctant to assume any new responsibility. This forced the Pastor, Reverend Gilbert Raymond, to seek the aid of the Ursulines of Brown County, Ohio. For twelve years these nuns staffed the Immaculate Conception Academy, and they are still affectionately remembered by some of the older inhabitants of Opelousas.

Because the Ursulines were so distant from their Mother House, their Superiors withdrew them from the Opelousas mission. Once more Father Raymond appealed to the Marianite Sisters. With characteristic zeal, Mother Mary of the Immaculate Conception arranged for the opening of the school. On September 3, 1879, five Marianites of Holy Cross embarked on their journey from New Orleans to this mission. To save the expense of railway fare, a water route was taken. Surely, the name of the boat was a misnomer, for it was called the Big Sunflower; yet, it crowded five Sisters into a state room which normally accommodated only two passengers. In this age of speed, the account of this trip challenges one's credulity. The three-day journey was an endurance test, even according to pioneer standards. One can imagine its attendant weariness, but added to all this the tactics of the Reconstruction days and Carpetbag rule were still prevalent, so when the Sisters asked for extra room they were told "to bunk with the Negro women who occupied the domestic quarters."[6] It was good preparation, nevertheless, to suffer these trials, for the Sisters would have much to endure in rehabilitating the mission of Opelousas.

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[4] Rex Laney, (editor) **Do You Know Louisiana?**, pp. 251-252.

[5] **Chronicles** of the Academy of the Immaculate Conception, Opelousas, Loouisiana.

On the sixth of September, 1879 the "Big Sunflower" was anchored at an improvised wharf at the head of Bayou Courtableau, Washington, six miles north of Opelousas. After an hour's ride in a hackney coach, drawn by two gray mules, the Sisters alighted at the convent gate too fatigued to partake of the repast prepared for them by the caretaker. They looked forward to a much-needed rest, but soon learned that unscreened windows and beds unprotected by mosquito nets made sleep impossible.

Between September sixth and September ninth, to make the place look habitable, the Sisters incessantly scoured the building which had been unoccupied for a number of years. Not only did the mosquitoes cause sleepless nights, but also the night prowlers, or tramps, for whom the vacant house had become a resort. The historian of those days records that "Doors were opened, chairs and benches stumbled over, and it was a nightly occurrence to find a face peering in at a window."[7] The saintly Pastor, Reverend Gilbert Raymond, by his kindly interest and generous encouragement, did much to alleviate the fears of the Sisters and make them feel at home "in the land of Evangeline."

Dudley Le Blanc in his **True Story of the Acadians**[8] says that the Acadians of Louisiana have retained better than anywhere else the characteristics of their ancestors—those of spontaneous gaiety and lack of all stiffness and formality—which united with their Catholic heritage made teaching the Acadian children of Opelousas a pleasure.

There is a link with this glorious past in one of the community's members—Sister Mary of St. Bartholomew (Durand), a native of St. Martinville where Evangeline landed, and where she lived in the home of one of Sister's distant cousins—Mrs. Voorhies. It is still Evangeline who gives St. Martinville a gentle and distinct importance. Beneath the Evangeline oak, Emmeline Labiche (Evangeline) is said to have met her faithless Louis Arceneaux (Gabriel.) The grave of Evangeline is near the left wing at the rear of the ancient church, oldest in the state, St. Martin's, established in 1765 by Jean Francois, Capuchin priest and missionary.

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[6] **Chronicles** of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, Opelousas, Louisiana (1879).

[7] **Chronicles**, House of Opelousas, p. 4.

[8] Page 84.

Hartnett Kane's **Bayous of Louisiana**[9] gives a delightful account of the glory of the "old days" when Charles Durand, Sister Mary of St. Bartholomew's grandfather, imported spiders from China and had his slaves turn them loose so that they would weave their webs in the three-mile pine and oak alley leading to his colonial home. After this was accomplished, Mr. Durand then ordered the slaves to sprinkle the webs with silver and gold dust with bellows so that it would form a canopy for the occasion of the marriage of his two daughters. Mr. Durand was a native of Nantes, France, and married a direct descendant of the Acadians.

Ever since Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence, a Catholic Church has stood within the present city limits of Opelousas.[10] In 1776, the first Church was built for the Indians and to care for the defenders of the fortress located in Opelousas. In 1797, as George Washington retired from the presidency of the United States, Michel Prudhomme, an early Opelousas settler, presented a tract of land for a Church site, the very tract of land whereon the Church of Opelousas stands today. In 1798 a wooden Church building was constructed and dedicated. In 1823 a new and more commodious church was built to serve the people of Opelousas and most of Saint Landry Parish for the long space of eighty years, witnessing three great epochs of American History—Expansion, Unification, and Imperialism, as factually revealed by her participation in the Mexican War, the War Between the States, and the Spanish American War.

The foundation for the present Church was begun in 1903 by the Reverend John Engebrink. The story of St. Landry's Church of Opelousas is marked by the lives and remarkable labors of Father Engebrink and the devoted brothers, Father Gilbert Raymond and Father Francois Raymond, as well as the present Pastor, Right Reverend Monsignor A. B. Canon Colliard.

The walls of the new church were begun in the winter of 1908-1909. On August 8 previous (1908), Archbishop Blenk had laid the cornerstone at impressive ceremonies. The building was occupied and the first Mass offered in the new precincts on the first Friday of April, 1909.

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[9] Page 225 et seq.

[10] Dudley LeBlanc, **True Story of the Acadians**, p. 84.

Besides erecting the new church and new presbytery, Father Engebrink also turned his efforts to the erection of a new Academy for girls. This was constructed and designed by Mr. Babin of New Orleans in 1905.[11] The new quarters were occupied during the Christmas holidays of 1906.

Father Engebrink looked forward to the completion of the interior of the beautiful brick church, but Divine Providence ruled otherwise, and he died on June 16, 1918. His body was buried in the church next to the remains of his revered predecessor, Father Gilbert Raymond. Opelousas grieved sincerely over his passing. [12]

The task of completing the new St. Landry's church was left to the next Pastor to accomplish. Right Reverend Monsignor A. B. Canon Colliard assumed the Pastorate in 1919. Monsignor Colliard renovated the church interior, adding frescoing and installing beautiful stained-glass windows that add tremendously to the beauty and devotion of St. Landry's.

The Immaculate Conception Academy was reopened September 15, 1879, with Mass of the Holy Ghost celebrated by the Very Reverend Gilbert A. Raymond, Vicar General of the Diocese, who was shortly thereafter renamed Pastor of the Church of St. Landry at Opelousas. According to the printed **prospectus** of this econstruction era, the Academy offered a course of instruction extensive, solid, varied, above all else useful and practical, embracing French and English in all branches, Penmanship, Geography, Ancient, and Modern History, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Natural Philosophy, Astronomy, Botany. Other subjects, Music, Drawing, Painting, the making of artificial flowers, Sewing, Embroidery, and Tapestry were offered. Parents were assured through religious instruction that the moral character of the pupils was formed and that their health and well being would receive the maternal attention of the Marianites.[13]

One consolation the Sisters enjoyed was the manifest interest taken by the majority of the people of Opelousas. Those who particularly distinguished themselves were the Reverend Fathers Gilbert and Francois Raymond, Messrs. Perrodin, Madame P. Roy, and Doctor Estorge.

In February, 1880, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors, the Reverend Mother General, and the associate of Very Reverend Father Moreau, accompanied by Mother Provincial, Sister Mary of the Immaculate Conception, praised the work accomplished in the brief span of the Academy's existence.

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[11] **Catholic Action of the South**, October 22, 1942, Column 2, p. 9.

[12] **Catholic Action of the South**, Otober 22, 1942, Col. 3, p. 9.

[13] **Prospectus** of the Academy of the Immaculate Conception, in Archives of Marianite Provincial House, New Orleans.

The school did not enjoy the patronage it deserved in the early 'nineties, but as Opelousas itself grew, the appreciation of the Sisters' work increased. A larger school building was needed to accommodate the increased enrollment. During the administration of Sister Mary of St. Rose (Trepagnier), this new structure was begun in June, 1906.

A year of benediction and prosperity followed in the session 1907-1908, the registration of both the day and boarding school was greater than any other year. Through a quiet flow of years the Academy continued to operate, though its enrollment never soared past the one hundred mark. In 1914 the rumbling of drums once more echoed through its halls disturbing the peace of the Sisters and the students. Sister Mary of St. Rose (Trepagnier), Superior of the Academy, was elected a deputy to attend the General Chapter of the Marianite Sisters held in Le Mans, France. The honor brought with it much attendant suffering, principally that of crossing the Atlantic ocean and of braving the danger of submarine warfare. Opelousas turned out **en masse** to bid **adieu** to its beloved Sister Rose, who had endeared herself to the gentle folk of the Evangeline country. The Sisters crossed and recrossed the ocean in safety, but Sister Mary of St. Rose did not return to her beloved Acadian land, for she was retained in New Orleans as the Assistant Provincial.

Right Reverend Monsignor Colliard, upon assuming the Pastorate of St. Landry's in 1919, set to work to promote Catholic education for the children of his flock. When he assumed the direction of the parish there were some sixty-seven pupils in the schools and four Sisters on the faculty.[14] That his work bore fruit is to be seen in the registration of the 1946-1947 term of nearly eight hundred pupils and a faculty of fifteen Sisters and three lay teachers.

The Academy continued its regular routine of classes through succeeding decades. On February 28, 1927, a letter from the State Department of Education, Baton Rouge, announced that the Academy had been placed on the list of State-approved schools.

On December 8, 1929, the Academy celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary. On the eve of the feast, a Mass was offered for the deceased Marianites who had labored on this mission, and on the eighth of December a Pontifical High Mass was offered by the Most Reverend Jules Benjamin Jeanmard, D.D., Bishop of Lafayette, who delivered an eloquent sermon. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament followed the Mass. At six o'clock in the evening an artistic program was presented by the Academy students. The ceremonies closed with a banquet served to the clergy and prominent men of the town by the Mothers' Club. Numerous friends and visitors extended congratulations to the Sisters and expressed the wish that "the days of the future be as blessed as were those of the past".

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[14] **Catholic Action of the South**, October 22, 1942, Col. 4, p. 9.

"In its highest meaning, education is a cooperation by human agencies with the Creator for the attainment of His purposes in regard to the individual who is to be educated, and in regard to the social order of which he is a member."[15] Such was the characteristic formation of the Academy's students through the years: In the early days of 1858 good Mother Mary of the Desert guided the destiny of the Academy and trained the youthful Acadians as well as the aristocratic Creoles to the customs of **la belle France;** in the 'nineties, Sister Mary of St. Rose was as busily engaged inculcating into those young hearts the traditions of her Acadian or Creole ancestors; later, under the direction of Irish-born Superiors, both American citizens, Sister Mary of St. Adrian (Collins), and Sister Mary of St. Edith (Dinneen), the young generation enjoyed the same basic education but with less emphasis on the **grand monde** of France.

In the field of Catholic action, such as Vocation Week, Catholic Press Month, Education Week, retreats, sodality conventions, Red Cross drives, campaigns for the Propagation of the Faith, Forty Hours' Devotion, May devotions, and parish and diocesan tournaments, the Academy of the Immaculate Conception reaped a rich reward.

During the first year of his Pastorate, the saintly Father Gilbert Raymond organized a boys' school. In 1855 these classes were taught in the Presbytery, but within a short time a suitable building was erected and St. Mary's Academy for boys came into existence. The initial enrollment was thirty boarders and forty day pupils. Father Gilbert Raymond was Principal, and his brother, Father Francois Raymond was assistant. Two lay teachers completed the faculty. After "Father Gilbert's school" closed, the Marianites had their first experience of co-education, for the boys enrolled at the Academy. Today the descendants of these boys in the same Academy are receiving a Catholic education under the direction of Sister Mary of St. Adrien, Superior, and a faculty of fourteen Sisters and three lay teachers.

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[15] Reverend Paul E. Campbell, A.M., Litt.D., LL.D., Essay, "Authority in Eudcation," quoting from the Pastoral letter of the American Hierarchy, 1919.

Sister Mary of St. Edith (Dinneen), Superior during the years 1927-33, converted the auditorium into four classrooms which were soon not only comfortably filled but crowded, and pupils were being rejected because of lack of space.

The need of added facilities became so imperative that permission was given to erect a frame building, which was completed and ready for the opening of classes September, 1935. A combination Gymnasium and auditorium, a science laboratory, a library, and seven large classrooms were provided for in the plan. Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, D.D., Bishop of Lafayette, blessed the new school. Enthusiasm reached a high peak when its doors opened to 465 students in September, an enrollment which later mounted to 500.

Coincidental with the dedication of the Academy was the conferring of the title of Honorary Canon on the beloved pastor, Reverend A. B. Colliard, by His Excellency, Most Reverend Jules Benjamin Jeanmard, D.D. To commemorate this occasion, the pupils tendered Reverend Canon Colliard a reception in the school gymnasium September 15, 1935. It was appropriate to use the new school gymnasium first for the purpose of tendering honor to Canon Colliard, who undertook the responsibility of all the details of building the school, even to the extent of his own financial support. Surely, one could think that the overcrowding problem had been solved, that the new, large, airy classrooms would more than accommodate the student body. Not many sessions passed, however, when there was another insistent call for additional classroom space. Scarcity of material and exorbitant prices made building prohibitive; hence, a temporary alteration was made on the second floor providing an emergency room large enough to accommodate thirty commercial pupils, and releasing a classroom for the girls' Freshman class.

Opelousas' buildings are still of a temporary nature; yet, buildings are not absolute evidence of successful achievement. The need of them bespeaks progress, and the purpose they serve gives them meaning. True progress, as measured by Divine standards, is found in the spirit that prevails and the work that is done for the salvation of souls. Truly might it be said that the zeal and the spirit of self-sacrifice of the pioneer Marianites have suffered no diminution in their successors. Heroic daughters of a saintly Founder, Very Reverend Basil Moreau, the Marianites today are as eager as were their predecessors for the advancement of Catholic education.

With a faculty of fiften Sisters, three lay teachers, and an enrollment of nearly eight hundred pupils, the Academy of the Immaculate Conception in the 1946-1947 term ranked among the finest in the Lafayette Diocese. The course of studies offered is that of the standard State-approved Secondary School. A well-organized music department affords education in instrumental and vocal music, while the band of forty members furnishes varied and entertaining programs. No school or civic function is complete without the appearance of the A.I.C. Band.

Through school plays and programs arranged for special occasions, the dramatic talent of the pupils finds an outlet. The High School and upper grammar school groups do very creditable choral work, as instanced at the excellent rating received in a recent Diocesan Singing Contest.

A well-organized Sodality of the Blessed Virgin keeps young hearts attuned to the inspirations of their Immaculate Queen and Mother. For the elementary pupils, there is the sodality of the Holy Angels, while the boys are proud as Altar Boys to be most faithful to their duties near and around God's altar.

In practically every walk of life the past pupils of the Academy are paying a perfect tribute to their Alma Mater by their good and gracious lives. The scholastic standing of A.I.C. has always been excellent. Its graduates have made good records in the colleges and universities in which they pursue their higher course of studies.

The Academy pupils have always shown marked devotion to Our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament. They begin their school day by making a visit to the Blessed Sacrament—a practice all the more praiseworthy because it is not a requirement of the school. A faithful attendance at Holy Mass, frequent reception of the Sacraments, participation in so far as possible in all the ceremonies of the Church; generous response to the appeals for the missions; the Lenten sacrifice of their spending money for the Seminary fund, and more recently for the Bishops' collection for the starving children of Europe—all testify that the work of the Sisters has borne its best fruit in the spiritual life of their pupils.

Practically all the furnishings of the chapel have been the gifts of different classes of graduates. The campus, too, was beautified by the erection of a grotto, the gift of the class of '45—dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows, to whom the Marianites have a special claim by honoring her daily in their Seven Dolor beads. The purpose of this grotto was to commemorate the Catholic boys who paid the supreme sacrifice in World War II.

While concentrating upon the spiritual and the mental development of the students, the Academy does not overlook their physical development. In the field of athletics, A.I.C. has achieved notable success. Under the leadership of Reverend Charles Marin, the boys have a well-organized football team, playing a full schedule and for the most part giving a good account of themselves. There is a demand, however, for a full-time physical education director and coach, so that all the boys will be able to participate in the athletic program. Civic-minded men and youth leaders, who sense the benefit of well-rounded physical training, have assumed the responsibility of providing and paying the salary of a full-time physical education director for the boys.

The girls' basketball teams, always fortunate in having an excellent coach, have many victories to their credit. Theirs is the unique distinction of having won first place in the Diocesan tournament every year with but one exception, thereby securing the much-coveted first prize—the Bishop Jeanmard Trophy.

"I count all things but loss for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord,"[16] exclaimed Saint Paul in speaking of embracing the life of an apostle for Christ. In like manner have many Alumni from A.I.C. spoken through the years as they embraced the religious life.

Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross

Sr. M. of St. Thomas, M.S.C.	Mary Ida Hinckley
*Sr. M. of St. Augustine, M.S.C.	Anita Moriarity
Sr. M. of St. Bartholomew, M.S.C.	Alma Durand
Sr. M. of St. Michael, M.S.C.	Mabel Downey
Sr. M. of St. Pius, M.S.C.	Regina Arnaud
Sr. M. of St. Faustina, M.S.C.	Leola Manuel
Sr. M. of St. Celine, M.S.C.	Celine Noel

Sisters of other Orders

Sr. M. Pauline, S.S.J.	Genevieve Bernard
Sr. M. Martha, I.C.	Louis Richard
Sr. M. of St. Joan of Arc (McMillan), I.C.	
Sr. M. Elise, S.C.	Gladys Elise Boudreaux
Sr. M. Joseph, S.C.	Celeste Lafond

Priests

Rev. Charles B. Anderson	Rector, St. Vincent de Paul Church, New Orleans, Louisiana

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[16] Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians, III, 8.

*Deceased.

Rev. Jules Speyrer	Church of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, Kaplan, Louisiana
Reverend Roy Edwards	Assistant, Cathedral, Lafayette, Louisiana

At the Major Seminary (Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans)
Richard H. Vonvillain, from the Class of 1943
Gene Speyrer, from the Class of 1942
Wilfred Sylvester, from the Class of 1942

At the Minor Seminary, (St. Joseph's, St. Benedict, Louisiana)
Gene Lafleur, from the Class of 1946
Leslie T. H. Prescott, from the Class of 1946

To those who guided the Immaculate Conception Academy from the **antebellum** days of the nineteenth century to the days of the twentieth century, congratulations are due. The work of Sisters Mary of the Angels, Mary of the Passion, and Mary of the Desert, has not been in vain, much less was that of the late Superiors:

1879-1884 Sr. M. of St. Sebastian;
1884-1893 Sr. M. of St. Albina;
1893-1897 Sr. M. of St. Juliana;
1897-1898 Sr. M. of St. Veronica;
1898-1900 St. M. of St.Rose;
1900-1903 Sr. M. of St. Veronica;
1903-1911 Sr. M. of St. Rose;
1911-1912 Sr. M. of St. Albina;
1912-1915 Sr. M. of St. Rose;
1915-1916 Sr. M. of. St. Bernardine;
1916-1923 Sr. M. of St. Frederoic;
1823-1927 Sr. M. of St. Casimir;
1927-1933 Sr. M. of St. Edith;
1933-1939 Sr. M. of St. Adrian;
1939-1945 Sr. M. of St. Edith;
1945-19 Sr. M. of St. Adrian.

The Marianites in Opelousas have been singularly blessed in the devotedness and wholehearted co-operation of zealous Pastors. The kindness and fatherly interest of Reverend Fathers Raymond and Engebrink are among the treasured traditions of the community. Right Reverend Monsignor Canon Colliard, always alert for the welfare of the Academy, has given his moral support to every project undertaken for the betterment of the school. The current drive for funds to erect a school large enough to accommodate all the Catholic children of the Parish has so far been a success. With the continued support of this good Pastor and his capable Assistant, Reverend Charles E. Marin, Chairman of the drive, and with the co-operation of the people of Opelousas, the cherished dream of a new and a greater A.I.C. will, under Divine Providence, become a reality.

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE
BISHOP'S HOUSE
Lafayette, La.

July 6, 1947.

The Reverend Mother M. Xavier, Provincial
Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross
3500 St. Claude Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana

My dear Mother Xavier:

I learn with deep interest that you are going to publish a history of your Community in conjunction with your elaborate centennial celebration of the coming of the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross to Louisiana.

In offering you my sincerest congratulations on the great coming event, I feel the need of adding my most heartfelt thanks for the signal services that your devoted and self-sacrificing Sisters have rendered, and are rendering, in the six schools under their direction in my Diocese.

The pastors and faithful of Lake Charles, Opelousas, Franklin, Eunice and Ville Platte will want me to express, on this occasion, their own deep sentiments of gratitude, because they fully appreciate the signal advantage which is theirs of entrusting their children to the care of Religious who are second to none in the field of education. As further evidence that they are fully sensible of this blessing, the clergy and faithful of Lake Charles and Franklin are even now embarking upon an ambitious building program which will afford the Sisters greater facilities for their work and make room for the increasing number of pupils knocking at their door.

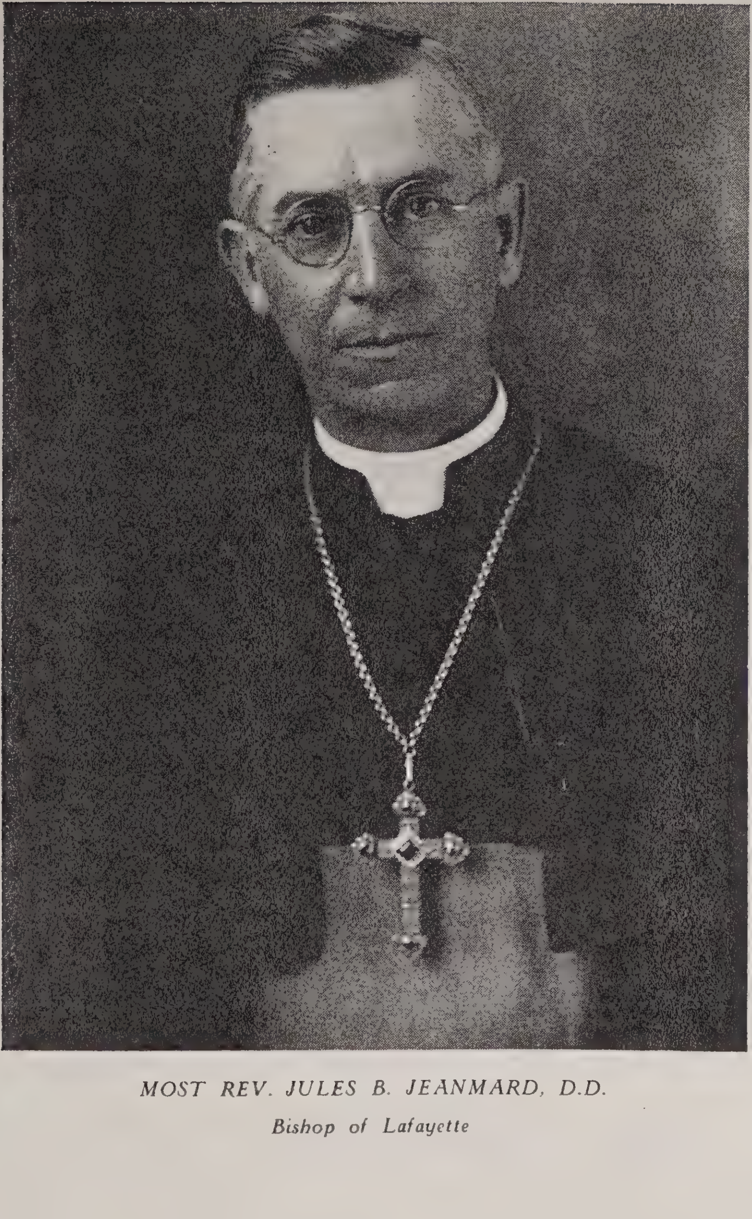
Arnaudville will have special reason to rejoice, because its Pastor and people are even now celebrating the return of your Sisters after an absence of twenty-nine years and are installing them in an up-to-date, attractive new convent and school building for the coming session.

All this is by way of telling you, dear Mother Xavier, with what joy and enthusiasm we, of the Diosese of Lafayette, will enter upon the festivities which will mark the centennial of the coming of your Community to Louisiana. May I add, even at the risk of offending your modesty, that the most flourishing of these years have been the last twelve, under your wise and capable administration.

With renewed expression of congratulations and gratitude, I am,

Very devotedly in Christ,

✝ *Jules B. Jeanmard,*
Bishop of Lafayette.



MOST REV. JULES B. JEANMARD, D.D.

Bishop of Lafayette

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

IN THE "OIL CAPITAL" OF SOUTH LOUISIANA

THE MARIANITE SISTERS of Holy Cross began their educational work at Lake Charles in the early 80's, founding St. Charles Academy, the pioneer Catholic School of that vicinity. They were invited to make a foundation in July, 1881, by the zealous Pastor, the Reverend Michael Kelly, a man of great energy and strength of character, but a year elapsed before the request was granted.

The year 1882 witnessed the arrival of the Marianites in Lake Charles, for on August 30 of that year Mother Mary of the Immaculate Conception (Prevered), accompanied by four Sisters, Sister Mary of St. Francis (Haggerty); Sister Mary of St. Paula (Carter); Sister Mary of St. Philomene (McCamley); and Sister Mary of St. Vincent (McDonald), left New Orleans for Lake Charles. They reached their destination in the darkness of night on August 31, and were welcomed by Reverend Michael Kelly and a committee composed of Mesdames M. J. Leveque, F. A. Gallagher, Jerry O'Brien and Joseph Cazeaux.

The night of the thirty-first was indeed dark, literally so, for beyond the depot were no lights; and dark metaphorically, too, for the first information imparted to these pioneers was that notice of their coming had not been received in time to obtain a suitable abode for them. Mr. Jerry O'Brien relieved the situation by gallantly and generously offering his home to the Sisters until a fitting dwelling could be located. Mrs. O'Brien seconded her husband's invitation, and at least for that night shelter was assured.

From the **Chronicles** of the House of Lake Charles many interesting and historical facts of early conditions are recorded. The first Superior, Sister Mary of St. Francis (Haggerty), seemed cognizant of the town's merits, its future prospects, and the advantages offered the Community by having a convent situated within the corporate limits of "this pushing, go-ahead town of some 1400 inhabitants:"[1]

> 1882—The town of Lake Charles, prettily situated upon the lake of the same name, is a pushing, go-ahead town of some 1400

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[1] **Chronicles**, House of Lake Charles.

> inhabitants. The homes are all snug and substantially built as becomes a town having within its corporate limits and immediate vicinity ten large saw-mills whose aggregate weekly production is 2,100,000 feet of lumber. This immense amount finds a ready market in Galveston and Corpus Christi, Texas, the Rio Grande and all the seaports of Mexico. There are three hotels, a fine large Hall, three planing mills, two shingle mills and a rice mill, besides several shipyards and two well-supported newspapers.
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> The lake, which is not more than three or four miles in circumference, might be considered a mere enlargement of the Calcasieu River, were the contact of the two more extended, but the river makes its exit scarcely a quarter of a mile from the point where it enters, making a most abrupt curve, one of the many turns which the Calcasieu takes on its way to the Gulf. The river is navigable for ninety miles.
>
> Though the largest part of the population is engaged in logging, saw-milling, the land readily repays cultivation. Rice and sugar cane grow abundantly on the rich prairie lands. Rice has only of late years been cultivated, but the **coulees** are ditched and dyked, and become unsurpassed rice fields, with an abundant yield.
>
> There is one Catholic Church but three others of different denominations. An amount of good has been done among the Catholics by the heroic efforts of the indefatigable and painstaking, self-sacrificing Pastor. If Lake Charles does not as yet blossom like the rose, there is every reason to believe that it will thus blossom in future years through the rising generation.

The Girls' school was the same building which 25 years previous was erected by Reverend J. F. Raymond of Opelousas as the first Catholic church in this part of Louisiana. Characteristic of the times was Father Raymond's remark to his Congregation, "that the church had cost considerable money because the windows and some more of the materials had to be brought froom Opelousas and there was no railroad in those days."[2] An addition was built to the little old church and a belfry which once surmounted it was blown down by a storm. In the **Catholic Calendar** of November 1, 1898, published by Rev. C. Van de Ven, the story of the early steps in Catholicism in Lake Charles is related:

> At that time there were no resident priests in these parts; the nearest were the Jesuits of Grand Coteau and the parish priests of Opelousas. Some of the older Catholics relate how they travelled in a buggy or wagon from Lake Charles to one of these

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[2] The **Catholic Calendar**, November 1, 1898, p. 1, Col. 2.

two places to make their first Holy Communion, to solemnize their marriage or to have their children christened. The priests of Opelousas used to make their yearly rounds through this part of the country, coming all the way from Opelousas, traveling on horseback in rain and sunshine through the trackless prairies and the wild woods, oftentimes swimming across the **bayous** and **coulees.** Thus they visited the people who were scattered here and there to administer to their spiritual wants and to keep the faith alive among them.

Towards the end of the sixties the first resident priests were appointed at Lake Charles in the persons of Fathers Badoil and Magniny, both very young and fresh from their native France. They had charge of the entire parish of Calcasieu and Cameron, and worked together valiantly and successfully until the year 1870 when that dreaded scourge, the yellow fever, visited Lake Charles. Both priests were stricken down by the plague at the same time, and they were alone in their little house without any one to wait on them or to care for them, both too sick to go out and call for help. It was not long before Father Badoil noticed that his companion was going to die. He crawled out of his bed to administer to him the last sacraments and shortly after that Father Magniny gave up his soul to God. Happily at this juncture God sent a Mr. Le Franc to the house, so Father Badoil's sad plight was discovered. Much heroism unwritten and unknown here below has been recorded by God's angel on the pages of the Book of life! Father Badoil happily recovered and labored in these missions for many years.

Father Badoil was replaced by Fathers Pouillon and Cuny, and later (1876) Fathers Charles and Jobard were sent to Lake Charles. They were succeeded in 1878 by Reverend Michael Kelly. He worked hard and did very much for the place. He contributed a good deal of his own resources and even his own labor to the building of the church.

With such heroic workers already in the Master's vineyard in Lake Charles, it was no small wonder that the Marianites found no difficulty in establishing themselves. The early chroniclers describe the school building as being "substantial and commodious, though unpartitioned." This was due, of course, to its having been formerly used as a church. School opened on September 11, 1882, with a registration of 28 pupils; however, during the course of this term the attendance increased to 70. The curriculum, entirely different from that of the Twentieth Century, was yet effective. The first annual Commencement Exercises took place July 17, 1883. This proved an enjoyable evening for the citizens of Lake Charles, who were proud of their new asset, the St. Charles Academy, pioneer Catholic school of the Southwestern section of Louisiana.

Father Kelly was not able to procure the building he had expected to use for a convent, and was obliged to house the Sisters in a small, inconvenient cottage, situated about one block from the church. Far from suitable, the main section of this rented house consisted of two rooms set apart for the reception of visitors. One of these rooms boasted a fireplace. The refectory and kitchen, separated from the main section, were often leaking and cold, so "that one would have been as comfortable in the open air as within the house."

Father Kelly, fully realizing the benefits accruing from the zeal of the Sisters, deemed it necessary to sponsor the erection of a convent. He not only raised most of the money, but personally drew the plans and also helped to lay the foundation. The new building was commenced in May, 1884, and in late December the Sisters found themselves enjoying the privacy of convential life in a large and spacious building. The new convent was blessed February 7, 1885, by Father Kelly. The sponsors were Messrs. Fournet and O'Brien and Mesdames Gallagher and O'Bryan.

Great credit is due Father Kelly for the Chronicles relate that often after a day spent in hard labor on his church buildings, Father Kelly would "swim down the **coulees**[3] on sick calls".

September of 1885 found the Sisters acceding to Father Kelly's request to take charge of the boys' school. This good work of educating the youth of Lake Charles continued until 1927 when the Landry Memorial School was opened with the Christian Brothers in charge.

On December 8, 1885, the Societies of the Children of Mary and the Holy Angels were organized, and the beautiful month of May, 1886, marked the first public exercises held in honor of Our Blessed Mother. The pious procession of chanting Children of Mary was headed by officers of the Sodality carrying Our Lady's Banner. After a sermon on the virtues and dignity of Mary, the Mother of God, the banner of Heaven's Queen was blessed. Aspirants were received in both sodalities—that of Our Lady and that of the Holy Angels. Then the President of the children of Mary ascended the altar steps to place her wreath of flowers upon Mary's brow.

It was Gregory XIII who said, "the Sodality is a school of salvation." Again Father Opitz, S.J. writes: "There is, in a certain sense, a vocation to the Sodality of Our Lady." And Reverend C. C. Martindale, S.J. in his book, **Christ's Cadets**, has likened the Sodality to "a school of sanctity with a style, an inspiration, and an ideal all its own?"[4] The joy of bringing souls to God through Mary, His Mother, brought immeasurable happiness to the Marianites, for they knew they were placing in their hands the key to personal holiness.

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[3] **Coulee**—in Louisiana, a sort of a canal or gully forming a gap between larger bodies of water.

The even tenor of school days at St. Charles Academy continued with the usual commonplace happenings until June 30, 1888, when for the first time graduation honors were conferred. The first graduate was Julia Leveque, later known in religion as Sister Mary of St. Hyacinth. For many years, Sister Mary of St. Hyacinth labored devotedly as music teacher at St. Charles Academy, her beloved Alma Mater, where she was held in high esteem by all who came under her gentle influence.

The vacation of 1889 was to prove a trying one for the Lake Charles Community. The sad news of the death of their beloved Superior, Sister Mary of St. Francis, at New Orleans on August 3, 1889, was a heavy loss. For five years she had worked bravely and unceasingly for the success of this mission.

1892 ushered in an era of conversions. At Eastertime, the Sisters had the happiness of witnessing the baptism of two colored children who had attended their Sunday afternoon instructions. Since that event, an average of two and nine-tenths of the pupils registered have been baptized. Considering that less than one-fifth of the registrants are non-Catholics, that percentage indicates that one out of every four non-Catholic students enrolled embraced the Catholic faith.

In 1899 Sister Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan), who had served as Superior of the Marianites' Algiers mission, came to Lake Charles in the same capacity. Sister Mary of St. Raphael's ability to cope with business problems enabled her to establish educational standards at St. Charles Academy that made it one of the leading Girls' schools in lower Louisiana.

On September 1, 1902, Reverend C. Van de Ven blessed the Boys' new school after the opening of the school session with the Mass of the Holy Ghost.

In July, 1909, a new Superior, Sister Mary of St. John Berchmans (Quilter), was named to succeed Sister Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan) who had been elected Provincial Superior of the Louisiana Province. The evening of April 23, 1910, a menacing fire, the most destructive in the history of Lake Charles, reduced to ashes the attractive group of buildings, the product of years of labor and of endless sacrifice. The brave, stout hearts of Sister Mary of St. John Berchmans and her Sisters were sorely tried.

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[4] C. C. Martindale, S.J., **Christ's Cadets**, Foreword, p. 1.

With her group of Marianites, Sister Mary of St. Albert (Hayes), Sister Mary of St. Gertrude (Cummings); Sister Mary of St. Ursula (Bailey); Sister Mary of St. Edith (Dinneen); and Sister Mary of St. Petronilla (Hayes), Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans proved the heroine of the day.

The first had started at Noon, in a small way, from unwatched burning trash outside a time-worn theatre across from the convent. It spread from place to place, taking toll of business houses, theatres, churches, schools, public buildings, and one hundred and nine residences.

As the fire proved erratic, starting anew here and there, measures for protection were futile; yet they were taken. Mother Berchmans, after deliberate consideration, decided upon placing all deeds, records and valuables into the hands of a dependable friend Miss Pearl Moss, to be taken by her in her buggy to a place of safety in the woods. This precaution was in vain, for the unquenchable fire, not satiated with the town, attacked its environs, and the papers were destroyed.

Mother was not aware of this now calamity. In company with Sister Mary of St. Petronilla and Doctor Martin, a loyal friend of the Marianites, she was busily engaged in trying to save some of the household furnishings, when the heat from the courthouse became so intense that the windows cracked and splintered, allowing the hungry flames to enter. With their veils drawn over their faces, the Sisters and the Doctor who used his coat to protect his face, rushed to a place of safety. Sister Mary of St. Petronilla was the last to leave. She jumped through a smoldering window. The other Sisters had previously left with the boarders, heeding the warning they sensed in the crackling sound of the wood.

Many are the pathetic tales told of this great destructive fire that reveal the religious kindness and thoughtful piety animating the sufferers. A Sister, who had carried a Ciborium for hours, when asked the reason for doing this, replied, "At least, I will try to do something for Our Lord, if only I could find Father Cramers!" When Sister finally met the Pastor, he assured her that her loving care of the Blessed Sacrament was praiseworthy but rather unnecessary, as at the first sign of real danger, he had repaired to the church and chapel and consumed the sacred Hosts.

A crate of eggs, sent from Cameron to the Sisters by Father Hoes, was being **"saved"** by a practical Sister, whose thoughts were on supper. However, she had not reckoned with the flames! For hours before, the eggs had all been cooked, the intense heat having solidified them, even though the crating had not yet burned.

Several hours after the fire had done its worst to her convent, Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans met Reverend Father Cramers carrying a waste basket of photographs. Knowing how very dearly she regarded Franklin and her former pupils, the priest said: "I have some consolation for you. I have the Franklin photographs." Mother appreciated the thoughtful kindness of this priest of God, and thanked him, but reminded him sadly: "Father, we have no home!" The kind priest was not wrong in assuming that the St. Patrick's Sanitarium, which was still standing, was a possible refuge. The Incarnate Word Sisters in charge gave comfort and shelter not only to the Marianites but also to Father Cramers, his Assistant, and the boarders of St. Charles Academy.

The heroic generosity and noble assistance of the citizens of Lake Charles will ever be a golden page in the annals of the Marianites: An alumnus of St. Charles' Boys' School offered his home to the Sisters, and soon they were comfortably established in the James Ware Gardiner home. This hospitality was accepted until a conveniently located, large frame building known as the Fournet home was rented. This served as a convent until Christmas eve in 1914.

Christmas eve, 1914, brought more than the usual felicity, for the Sisters moved into their new home on South Ryan Street. Sisters and pupils had a home of which they were proud. There was, though, a dearth of household furniture and chapel accessories. Time, friends, and interested Superiors have made St. Charles Academy the most up-to-date and best-equipped Marianite mission in Southwest Louisiana. The growth and maintenance of the Academy is a perpetual tribute to the zeal of the priests and Sisters to the generosity of their friends, Catholic and non-Catholic, of Lake Charles and vicinity.

To the able women who have guided her destiny, much credit is due, and especially to Sisters Mary of St. Justin (Neubig) Sister Mary of St. Seraphia (O'Brien) Sister Mary of St. Edith (Dinneen) and Sister Mary of St. Adrian (Collins) for their ability to cope with financial difficulties and educational demands, and to foresee and plan for the growing future.

One of the major goals was attained on April 19, 1924 when the State Department of Education officially approved and declared the St. Charles Academy of Lake Charles an approved secondary private institution with the same rank as State-approved four-year public High Schools. The fact that the Academy has an A-1 standing on the list of State-approved schools, both in the High School and grade departments, is sufficient testimony of its merit.

An outgrowth of the St. Charles Mothers' Club of 1917 is the Parent-Teachers Association officially organized in 1925. This splendid organization works in close co-operation with the Academy and the Sisters. Today the group works side by side with the National Organization of Clubs.

The population of the parish of Calcasieu and of the city of Lake Charles represents a fine cross section of the best immigrants from all the States of the Union with a small foreign population and an unusually small Negro population. These elements have created a progressive people whose courage has no bounds and whose visions have developed this Parish as one of the most important and wealthy sections of the state. The religious as well as the economic progress of Lake Charles measures up to expectations. The city is now considered the "oil capital"[5] of South Louisiana.

The fiftieth anniversary of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross celebrated in 1933 was a golden panorama of accomplishment in Lake Charles and its vicinity. It covered a span of years of usefulness in pioneering Catholic education and Catholic activities that stretched from the last century to the present. This memorable occasion gave rise to a spontaneous show of appreciation on the part of the citizens of Lake Charles. The day's program began with solemn High Mass at the Church of the Immaculate Conception.

More than a thousand guests called during the open-house hours, and the day was one that lingered pleasantly in memories of the faculty, the student body, and the many friends of the Academy. The banquet at noon proved a happy event. Mrs. Marie Gallagher and Mrs. Jerry O'Brien Powell, the only two living persons who served as a welcoming committee to the Sisters who first came to Lake Charles in 1882, were honor guests of the occasion. His Excellency, Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, D.D., Bishop of Lafayette, graced the occasion with his presence and addressed the assembly.

The program ended with a graduation program of the High School and Seventh Grade in the Academy auditorium. The honor student graduate was by happy coincidence a niece of the first graduate, well known and loved as Sister Hyacinth (Leveque). A very interesting feature of the graduation exercises was the fact that several of the graduates represented the third generation of families that have attended St. Charles Academy during its fifty years. There has been each year some member of the Oliver Moss family in the student body. Dorothy Walsh represented the third generation of girls in her family. Her aunt, Sister Mary of St. Hubert, (Walsh), is a member of St. Charles' faculty.

The people of Lake Charles appreciate the value of a Catholic education today as never before. This may be observed by the large increase in the enrollment as the years went by. In 1892, there was but one graduate, Julia Leveque, (Sister Mary of St. Hyacinth). The graduating class of the 1947-1948 session numbers forty-four, the largest graduating class of girls from a Catholic institution in the Diocese of Lafayette.

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[5] Laney, op. cit., p. 227.

From the pioneer Catholic institution of Southwest Louisiana, founded in the early 80's, St. Charles Academy has developed into a noted establishment, housed in a spacious and substantial brick structure, with airy, well-lighted classrooms, and a campus that offers unlimited opportunities for athletics and recreation.

St. Charles' Alumnae give gracious tribute to their Alma Mater. One of the most humble among them (Sister Mary of St. Norbert (O'Bryan) was privileged in voicing to the world our National Eucharistic Hymn. The O'Bryans, at whose home the pioneer Marianites in Lake Charles, enjoyed shelter and hospitality, remained actively interested in the welfare of St. Charles Academy. To "Mother" (Mrs. Jerry) O'Bryan, and "Ma" (Mrs. Frank) Gallagher, the convent's godmothers, the Sisters often had recourse in numerous trials and difficulties. A daughter of Mrs. O'Bryan, Sister Mary of St. Norbert, M.S.C., Alumna of St. Charles, added to the glory of the Academy a happy crowning complement.

The Eighth National Eucharistic Congress Souvenir Supplement of **Catholic Action of the South,**[6] November 17, 1938, in an account of a contest, conducted within the Archdiocese of New Orleans for the words of a Eucharistic Congress hymn, gives the following:

> Compositions were submitted anonymously and judged without the committee members knowning who had presented them. The words of a hymn, "Hosanna, Glory, Praise be Thine",[7] composed by Sister Norbert O'Bryan, a Marianite of the Holy Cross, then stationed at Houma, Louisiana, were chosen for the hymn.

May our Eucharistic King, Whom Sister Mary of St. Norbert praised in her hymn, continue to guide and direct the Marianites of Holy Cross, the humble workers of His vineyard, the educational field of Lake Charles at St. Charles Academy.

The Sodality of the Children of Mary and the Society of the Holy Angels, organized December 8, 1885, continued to grow not only on a school basis but also on a diocesan-wide plan and a deanery-district basis. Today they exemplify Catholic Action by actively participating in school, city, parish, and diocesan progress and projects. St. Charles Academy has won honors in the various liturgical, oratorical, and theological contests that have been sponsored by the lafayette Diocesan Union of Sodalities. The students are taught the chant of the Church for her liturgy and other sacred music. They have many opportunities to participate in the activities of glee clubs, school band, and church choir. As a matter of fact, the choir group placed first in the Diocesan Liturgical Contest in 1946 and second in 1947.

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[6] Page 26.

[7] Entire hymn may be found in Eucharistic hymnal for the Congress.

Under the capable direction of the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, the most active branch of the Sodality, an average of one hundred pagan babies has been ransomed each year. The ransoming of pagan babies is considered a very important spiritual activities at St. Charles Academy. How very proud the members are to be privileged to name the baby and to receive a certificate of Baptism. The C.S.M.C. adopted a Negro mission at Grand Coteau conducted by the Jesuit Fathers, and untold good work has resulted from the various drives, both spiritual and material.

As time marches on, so do the Marianites in their work of Catholic education. With an increase in the number of students in both elementary and high school, many extra-curricular activities have been introduced. The time has now come when the student body has outgrown the present facilities and another large, up-to-date school building must be added to meet the situation.

Stressing the importance of the task to be undertaken, the Right Reverend Monsignor Louis H. Boudreaux, S.T.D., V.F., explained in detail the $75,000 "nest egg" drive towards the erection of the new Catholic school buildings. St. Charles Academy intends to build a new grammar school, an auditorium and gymnasium. The Catholic School Board, under the general chairmanship of Monsignor Boudreaux, is sponsoring the drive.

This is a task, a great and glorious task, and the friends of St. Charles Academy feel that the work of the Sisters of Holy Cross has borne fruit in the form of educated Catholic and non-Catholic men and women who can compete effectively in the social and business world, reflecting credit on their Alma Mater; hence their interest is most encouraging and highly appreciated. The same indomitable spirit that permeated the citizens of Lake Charles in the early 80's animates their descendants today in this noble work of Catholic education. To forge ahead and to keep abreast of the times requires modern, adequate facilities. These are assured by this wonderful building plan.

From the ranks of the students enrolled at St. Charles many have turned away from the promise of success in wordly pursuits and directed their steps to the convent of the Marianites. Others, from contacts with the Sisters who formed the faculty of the Academy, have been inspired to join the Marianite ranks.

SPIRITUAL SERVICE OF LAKE CHARLES RESIDENTS AND ST. CHARLES' ALUMNAE IN THE RANKS OF THE MARIANITES

*Sr. M. of St. Hyacinth	Julia Leveque
*Sr. M. of St. Norbert	Florence O'Bryan
*Sr. M. of St. Rosalie	Marie Edith Leveque
Sr. M. of St. Catherine	Frances Marie Moss
*Sr. M. of St. Hilary	Rose Cecile Rice
*Sr. M. of St. Bonaventure (Jennings, La.)	Leona Legros
Sr. M. of St. Aurelia	Mathilde Rhorer
Sr. M. of St. Blandine	Edna Hebert
Sr. M. of St. Joan of Arc	Marie Arceneaux
Sr. M. of. St. Germaine (Lake Arthur)	Marjorie Buckingham
Sr. M. of St. Clothilde, (Lake Arthur)	Lurline Broussard
Sr. M. of St. Collette, (Lake Arthur)	Christelle Guidry
Sr. M. of St. Zita, (Lake Arthur)	Lillie Guidry
Sr. M. of St. Moinica	Frances Stelly
Sr. M. of St. Rosalie	Josephine Moss
Sr. M. of St. Peter	Lurlie Boudoin
Sr. M. of St. Robert	Virginia Larkin

VOCATIONS TO THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD FROM THE BOY'S SCHOOL

Rev. James J. Malloy, S.J.

Rev. R. J. Gobeil

Rev. Joseph Zimmermann, C.M.

Rev. Father Kirk

Rev. Frank Zimmermann, C.M.

Five Brothers of the St. John Baptist de La Salle Community.

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*Deceased.

Those students who have not entered Religious life, have, by their devotion and loyalty always been a credit to the training they have received under the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross.

The graduates of St. Charles Academy may well share the tribute which His Excellency, Joseph Francis Rummel, gave to the girls from all the schools of the Louisiana Province.

> Your graduates always give evidence of a rare combination of dignity with childlike frankness and ease, a certain poise which I trust they may always carry with them through life.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

IN FERTILE PRAIRIE LAND

THE REGION of Louisiana in which Eunice is situated is the richest in Louisiana. A range of hills slope gradually into the cypress swamps and the Atchafalaya river of the East into the sea marshes on the south, into the prairies on the West, and into the pine flats and the alluvial bottoms of the Avoyelles region on the North. St. Landry parish is known for its picturesque beauty, progressiveness, and prosperity. Its rivers, the Atchafalaya and the Mermenteau, and its bayous, the Vermillion and the Teche flow into the Gulf.[1]

On August 30, 1911 Sister Mary of St. Raphael (O'Donovan), accompanied by Sister Mary of St. Albert, St. Edmund's first Superior, Sister Mary of St. Ursula, Sister Mary of St. Petronilla, Sister Mary of St. Gervaise, and Sister Mary of St. Attracta arrived in Eunice. These were the pioneers of the future St. Edmund's. Never were Sisters more heartily welcomed than were these. The Pastor, Reverend Father Chambon, was at the station to greet them. He was not alone—hundreds of others were there. Hundreds of tongues, with the naivete of the Acadians, armored by Faith, wholeheartedly chanted in soft tones the sweet refrain of the Acadian welcome, **"Je suis content de te voir. Mon plaisir de vous voir."** The Sisters' faces beamed with appreciation. Each family pleaded for the presence of the **Bonnes Soeurs** in their buggies or surreys. After brief and hopeless protestations, the Sisters yielded. With the help of a strong hand, they were enthroned in the conveyance. A procession was formed. Good Father Chambon was first. Then followed surrey and buggy, horses and carriages, and even mules, for **"toute la famille"** must be on hand in the church to welcome the God-given Sisters. Father Chambon, in the name of his parishioners, welcomed the Sisters in French. The French vivacious temperament could not be held in restraint. Many were the **"pieces de resistance"** by way of remarks offered in a somewhat subdued undertone, evidently a stage whisper to the Priest. All was heard, all enjoyed by both the people and the Sisters. The affectionate manner with which all was offered made the welcome most acceptable.

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[1] Laney, op. cit., p. 176.

A second parade wended its way to the convent, a half square away. Here a luncheon was served by the ladies of the town. Then a few misunderstandings were cleared away; for instance, one hostess asked the Sisters to take off their "hats;" to make themselves at home. Another would like to enroll as a scholar. The good soul was in her sixties. By degrees, the customs of a teaching Order were understood.

School opened September fourth at St. Paul's Institute, as the convent at Eunice was then known. One hundred and twelve students were enrolled. Eager for knowledge and thirsting for the "Living Waters," they thought not of the humble building, the old public school that had been lately renovated for them, they realized the supernatural manner in which the Church generates, nourishes and educates souls in the divine life of grace with her Sacraments and her doctrines.

Notwithstanding the good will on the part of pupils as well as the zeal of the Sisters, many were the amusing and sometimes ridiculous mistakes that were made. Once a Sister, anxious to call a child to the telephone, said, **"Depechez-vous, depechez,"** still no response was forthcoming. A little girl standing by politely asked to act as interpreter. Without ceremony, she cried, "Gal'lop! Gal'lop!" Indeed, the message was heeded. As the child reached the telephone, the little girl explained: "Sister, that girl speaks English. That is why she did not know what you were saying."

One of the Sisters could not understand why little Adam and Aaron missed Mass so often on Sundays; yet, they never missed school. All was explained to her satisfaction: "The bus she takes her to school, but the bus she works not on Sundays." Tite[2] Adam and Aaron went to the Chaplet. The "Chaplet" is an institution of the outlying districts of Eunice. One Sunday each month the neighbors assemble at a specially selected house to say the beads. As the distance to Church is very great, and as Sunday must be observed, the people seek this means of satisfying their conscience. These simple, sociable people of Southwestern Louisiana on such occasions combine duty and pleasure. Each guest contributes his portion of the evening's refreshments, enjoys a rather **impromptu** dance, a game of cards or dominoes, and also a good chicken gumbo. All continues merrily until morning when the chaplet is actually recited.

Perrin, in 1891, described the Eunice farmer:

> I went the other day to one of these sweet and simple country homes, and was received with the somewhat solemn, dignified and courtly hospitality that characterizes the native French

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[2] "Petite" (French for small).

> farmer when his castle is invaded. Soon after entering the home, we were handed a cup of black coffee. The pot is always on the hearth. There are many homes of this type in the state. They are a part of Louisiana as it is.
>
> In the fields around the house were small crops of cotton, sugar cane, rice, corn, sweet potatoes, and a row of tobacco. Flanking the field was a forest furnishing the family with fuel and lumber. The farmer threshes and cleans the rice from his fields. He pounds the corn for meal in a wooden mortar. His wife stores the sweet potatoes in a bin for the winter. She picks and gins the cotton, seeding it with her fingers.
>
> The farmer's wife spins and weaves the cotton into cloth, which she dyes with peach tree leaves and indigo, and of this she makes clothing for her family, blankets for her beds, curtains for her windows, and a covering for her floor. The patch of sugar cane supplies sugar and molasses for the family. From his stock of horses, the farmer cuts hair from their manes and tails to be woven into ropes, horse collars and harness. The mattresses are made of the moss gathered in the swamp. His wife milks the cows, and makes an occasional pot of butter by shaking the cream in a bottle or gourd. The farmer cures his own tobacco, and if one visits his little home made of cypress logs and a mud plaster mixed with moss, he offers his guest all these home-made hospitalities. In his simple way he lives in the midst of peaceful plenteousness. Life is sweet to him.

Perrin would have to add an innovation to his picture of the Eunice farmer, if he wished to bring it up to date, for the rice farmer from his hardpan acres is beginning to speak of airplanes for seeding, fertilizing and dusting; and of the new conversion process which leaves the vitamin content within the grain.[3]

Life was sweet for the Marianites who lived in Eunice. Their happiness lay chiefly in the performance of their duty. They planted the seed which was slowly but surely producing a harvest, that would one day prove comforting. The Sisters' endeavors followed the line usual in school routine: tests, exams, commencement exercises; Christmas and Easter holidays, the joys of First Communion days, of Sodality receptions, and of May Crownings punctuating the scholastic efforts.

On December 16, 1915 Mr. George A. Lange, Secretary of the Board of Catholic Gentlemen, was appointed by Reverend Father Chambon to summarize the history of the school. The early details are taken from his survey.

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[3] "Old World Louisiana" **The Catholic Digest**, June, 1947 p. 87.

When Reverend C. M. Chambon took charge of the Catholic Church of Eunice, Louisiana, September 15, 1910, he was instructed by His Grace, Most Reverend James Hubert Blenk, Archbishop of New Orleans, to establish a Parochial School to provide religious education for the children of the Parish. At that time the Church was in debt., and it was deemed impossible to raise any amount for this purpose. Consequently, Father Chambon, in accord with the recommendation of some of his friends, and with the permission of the Archbishop, borrowed the sum of $8,000 from the Weigman Bank of Amsterdam, Holland, at 5% interest, redeemable annually according to the scale established by the Holland bank, as explained in the plan of redemption printed on each bond. This amount was received through the First National Bank of Eunice, Louisiana, and disbursed as the need arose.

When the convent and the school buildings were completed, Father Chambon applied to the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross for a corps of teachers, and obtained them, with the conditions stipulated in the contract signed by the Provincial Superior, Mother Mary of St. Raphael O'Donovan, and Reverend C. M. Chambon, approved by His Grace, Most Reverend James Hubert Blenk. The school was scheduled to open at the beginning of September, 1911.

During this summer of 1911, the school building was entirely renovated; also, the building intended for the convent was considerably enlarged. Both buildings received three coats of paint, and were entirely furnished—one as a residence, and the other as a modern school, with heating apparatus and sanitary steel desks. Since then partly with the money netted by annual church fairs and partly with the money contributed by the Rector, a pavillion was erected, and an aisle added to the school. Meanwhile fences and sidewalks were added, completing the appearance of the building heretofore known as the St. Paul Institute of Eunice.

After four years of progressive development, the Parochial School of Eunice, was turned over to the people of the parish, and its administration entrusted to a board of Catholic gentlemen, appointed by the Rector. These gentlemen met for the first time on December 18, 1915, and the following officers were nominated:

Hon. Pres., Very Reverend M. Grace, S.J., President of St. Charles College, Grand Coteau.

President, Peter Kline, Jr.; Vice-Pres., George T. Guillet; Secretary, George A. Lange; Treasurer, D. Ardoin.

Members: Dr. Duplechain, C. E. Hebert, W. R. Belton, Thos. Dubourg, Dejean Ardoin, Chas. Detseller, Louis Savoy.

Ex-officio Members: Grand Knight of Knights of Columbus, Past Grand Knight of Knights of Columbus, Grand Regent, Daughters of Isabella, Vice Grand Regent, Daughters of Isabella.

The election having taken place, the board resolved that invitation be extended to Father Leslie Kavanaugh,[4] to call on them and to visit the school, the following month. The board adjourned the meeting until the third Sunday in January.[5]

Five years later, in 1920, the history of the Convent was quite different from what it had been previously. The close of this year found the Sisters of Eunice without a home. Of all the misfortunes, few can equal the one suffered by the Marianites that sad wintry night of December 15, 1920. As the evening promised to develop into a cold night and a still colder day following it, preparations were made for the morrow. The kerosene stoves, the principal means of heating the convent, were filled to capacity. One was lighted and left in the Superior's office on the first floor while the Community assembled for spiritual reading on the second floor. Just as the Angelus was ringing, and the Sisters were starting to descend the stairs to the refectory, a cry of "Fire!" was heard. One of the first Sisters to reach the office door found the room in flames. In a few seconds, the hall and the stairs, the only means of exit, were enveloped in smoke. The pine building roared in a seeming contest with the cruel "Northwester" that brought sleet and freezing weather in its wake. Men and boys hastened to the aid of the Sisters; the hose, drawn on a two-wheel wagon by man power, was of little avail; the able direction of the Fire Chief, Mr. Moosa, as well as the hard work of the volunteer fire fighters was useless. The fire was too hot even for the bravest to attempt any salvage. The convent was doomed, and it seemed as if the school also would be destroyed.

But the faith of the Sisters was rewarded. One of their number, fearing that the Sisters' days in Eunice were numbered, tried to save the school so that she could save Catholic education for Eunice. Armed with a picture of the Sacred Heart, Sister pleaded with the Sacred Heart to save the school. As her prayer was uttered, the whistling "Northwester" veered to the East, and the flames were driven across the open prairie. The school was saved. In seven minutes only ashes remained of the convent. The Sisters' lives had been saved, but they were homeless.

Kind ladies took the Sisters and their boarders to the Rectory. The Pastor, who was in New Orleans, had been informed by telephone of the misfortune. The devoted ladies spent the night with the Sisters awaiting the arrival of the early morning train, when Father Daull was expected. Father kindly gave his home to serve as a convent until one could be built. That same day the Marianites' Provincial, Mother Mary of St. James (Dooley), and her Assistant, Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans (Quilter), came to the aid of the Sisters. A mass meeting was held by the men of the town to provide immediately for the Sisters, as the people feared lest the Sisters abandon the mission at Eunice.

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[4] Superintendent of Catholic Education.

[5] From the minutes signed by George A. Lange, Secretary.

A committee was appointed to provide means for the erection of a convent within six months. Fifteen days later, the Bank of Eunice failed. The citizens lost all they had deposited in this bank. A smaller house to serve as a convent became a necessity. The gentlemen who so freely gave their time and money to help this project were Peter Klein, Dadier Ardoin, Fred Pecot, Forrest Nacol, Louis Meyer, and J. C. Keller.

The ladies were not outdone by the men's generosity. Headed by Mrs. Louis Meyer and Mrs. A. F. Magee, they made cash collections for clothing, bedding and current needs. Then it was that the Sisters realized what "the promised hundredfold" meant for them. Every mail brought packages, boxes and envelopes containing money; the express company delivered packages, and the train brought trunks. The Marianites of the Louisiana province had made the misfortune of their Sisters in Eunice their own. Clothing, bedding, even food must be shared. Reverend Mother in France heard the echo of the Sisters' distress, and wrote a letter expressive of the anguish that she and the Sisters at the Mother House suffered in union with those so heavily tried.

On May 31, 1921, the Sisters moved into their new convent home, which bore the name of their devoted Pastor, Reverend Edmund Daull. The blessing of St. Edmund Convent took place June 5. His Grace, the Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette, assisted by five priests, bestowed the blessing. His Grace expressed his sincere admiration and congratulations to the good people of Eunice who proved their deep appreciation of the work of the Sisters.

The ladies of Eunice again showed their devotedness to the Sisters on September 4, 1922. They organized the Mothers' Club, whose objective is to labor for the welfare of the school, an objective attained with unabated zeal and remarkable success. So successfully had they met the needs of each day, that when February 23, 1927, came everything was found to be in accord with the requirements of the State upon the visit of Mr. Charles F. Trudeau, State High-School Inspector, accompanied by Mr. W. B. Prescott, Parish Superintendent; St. Edmund's was State-approved.

A clipping from the **New Era** of March 3, 1927 is proof of the outcome of this inspection:

> Last Thursday St. Edmund convent was honored by a visit from the Parish Superintendent of Public Schools, Mr. W. B.

Prescott of Opelousas, and Mr. Charles F. Trudeau, State High School Supervisor. The visit resulted in St. Edmund's being officially recognized as a four-year State-approved High-School. This recognition places St. Edmund on a level with any public school in the state; it entitles its graduates to enjoy all the privileges thereby guaranteed. They may enter any college or school of higher education without being subjected to any examination whatsoever.

Congratulations are extended to Reverend Edmund Daull, the very active and efficient Principal, to whose untiring efforts this triumph is largely due.

Sincere appreciation and gratitude are offered the noble ladies of St. Edmund's Mothers' Club, who have sacrificed much in the cause of Catholic education.

The Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross have cause to be grateful indeed. It is but fifteen years since that Order opened a small parochial school in Eunice, and, despite fire, financial losses, and hampered conditions, the school has advanced so as to meet all requirements of the State.

Monsignor Sheen in "The Life of All Living" says,[6]

> In these days of intellectual famine, minds are hungerinng for truths, as bodies in days of food famine are hungering for bread. In such moments when hunger, either intellectual or physical, gnaws at one's very being, it is not essential to demonstrate that poisons must be avoided or that food must be taken; it is enough to present the **pabulum**.

The Marianites, under the spiritual direction of their Reverend Pastors, have been presenting "the **pabulum**" of Catholic doctrine for over a quarter of a century to the Catholic people of Eunice. This **pabulum** has been presented in various shapes and forms, class instruction, religious and secular, true interpretation in history and literature, sodality endeavors, missions, retreats, days of recollection. The work of Catholic education continued without interruption for the next six years.

The year 1933 not only brought with it a new Pastor to Eunice Catholics and a new Principal to St. Edmund's, the Right Reverend Monsignor Alphonse Martel, it also brought new impetus and more vigorous Catholic action in both Church and school. Events followed one another closely. In May of that year the elementary school was renovated; November 26, 1936, the Church was re-dedicated, having been lately completed interiorly; May 13, 1938, witnessed the first May Festival held in Eunice; September 4, 1938, the renovation of the convent was completed; March 19,

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[6] Monsignor Fulton Sheen in his preface to "The Life of All Living".

1939, a mission was given to the school children; June, 1939, the erection of a new High School and Gymnasium was begun, completed, and opened for use November 30, 1939. Through the efforts of Monsignor Martel, the Grade School was accredited, and with his cooperation a large Commercial and Home Economics department are in prospect.

Thus, despite fire, floods, financial crises, the convent of St. Edmund, Eunice, marches on. Her motto, **"In hoc signo vinces,"** has not been held aloft in vain. Numerous are those who in past years have filed from the doors of St. Edmund High School to occupy their place in life. Successfully have they steered their little barks secure from shoals and reefs and reflected honor upon their Alma Mater.

The Supervisors and the Reverend Pastors who labored in Eunice from 1911 to 1947 were:

Reverend Pastors

1910-1916	Reverend Celestin Chambon
1916-1918	Reverend Fred Bosch
1918-1930	Reverend Edmund Daull
1930-1933	Reverend A. Baudizzone
1933-1940	Right Reverend Monsignor Alphonse Martel

Superiors

1911-1912	Sister Mary of St. Albert
1912-1920	Sister Mary of St. Rosalie
1920-1927	Sister Mary of St. Catherine
1927-1930	Sister Mary of St. Norbert
1931 (January to August)	Sister Mary of St. Gabriel
1931-1938	Sister Mary of St. Ursula
1938-1939	Sister Mary of St. Kevin
1939-1943	Sister Mary of St. Rita
1943-	Sister Mary of St. Columbkille

ST. EDMUND'S ARMY FOR CHRIST

Eight of the Alumnae members of St. Edmund High School entered the army of Christ as Marianites:

Sister Mary of St. Julianna	Myra Stagg
Sister Mary of St. Callistus	Blanche Arceneaux
Sister Mary of St. Blandine	Edna Hebert
Sister Mary of St. John Chrysostom	Rosa Nacol
Sister Mary of St. Placidus	Agnes Jones
Sister Mary of St. Claire	Kathryn Schaffhausen
Sister Mary of St. Eulalia	Beatrice Boudreaux
Sister Mary of St. Euphrasia	Lorena Miller

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

IN THE LAND OF LEGENDS

THE HISTORIC BACKGROUND of Ville Platte is as fantastic as fiction. Legend has it that one of its earliest settlers had dealings with Lafitte, the famous Louisiana pirate; another legend relates the sad fate of the beautiful Mademoiselle Josephine de Vidrine, a lady of French nobility imbued with the revolutionary ideas of her day. As stubbornness was her strongest characteristic, Miss Vidrine was responsible for a duel in which her brother slew his opponent. In desperation, both brother and sister fled from their native France and sought refuge in Ville Platte.

History relates that the first settler of the town was a Marcellin Garand, political French exile, who had experienced the pain of snowblindness of the frozen wastes of Russia. From desperation, born of fear, he somehow wended his way to Ville Platte. Other exiles of the French Revolution soon sought refuge in the land that had offered release to Durand. Their French customs and mannerisms remain even today. A marble slab in the old Ville Platte cemetery bears silent witness to the memory of **"Marcellin Garand Adjutant-Major sous L'Empire Francais, ne en Savoie en 1781-decede en 1852."**[1]

Many who came to Ville Platte, of course, were the small and honest farmers and cattlemen who settled down quietly and sought to make a living on their hard soil. Zealous missionaries found a rich field for their labors among the descendants of these fine French families, but the work increased to such an extent that the generous hand of religious Sisterhood was needed.

The Marianites' predecessors, the Sisters of Mount Carmel, established themselves at Ville Platte in 1913, moving there from Washington, Louisiana, where they had established a convent as early as 1879. These Sisters were and are still loved and revered by the people of Ville Platte; yet circumstances demanded that their major superiors close this mission, a mission that in its ten years of existence had furnished several subjects to Religious life. Several of the Ville Platte students entered the Mount Carmel order and the Incarnate Word Convent, San Antonio, Texas. One of the boys entered the holy priesthood, Reverend Joseph Ferbis Lafleur, United States Army Chaplain, ordained April 2, 1938, killed in action September 7, 1944, in the Philippines.

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[1] **Weekly Gazette**, Ville Platte. Jules Ashlock, (editor), July 2, 1932. "Marcellin Garand, Adjutant-Major, under the French Empire, born in Savoy in 1781—died in 1852."

In 1930 the new and very active Pastor, the Right Reverend Monsignor J. Maurice Bourgeois, invited a new community to reopen the convent at Ville Platte. The Sisters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, whose Mother House is located in St. Joseph, New Brunswick, Canada, endeared themselves to the people, but circumstances again obliged their major superiors to withdraw the Sisters from this distant mission.

Threatened by this great loss, Monsignor Bourgeois determined to repair it, better to forestall it, if possible. He sought the aid of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. A unique arrangement was proposed, and accepted. The Marianites sent five Sisters to the new mission, while four of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart would remain. Together, the two Communities worked for God's honor and glory and for the salvation of souls during the scholastic session of 1938-1939, at the close of which the Marianites took full charge of the mission. The pioneer band arrived at Ville Platte August 27, 1938, comprising Sister Mary of St. Cecilia (Braud), Superior; Sister Mary of St. Anselm (Brechtel), Sister Mary of St. Martina (Maura Daly), Sister Mary of St. Columba (Nellie Walshe), and Sister Mary of St. Madeleine Sophie (Wilhelmina Hebert.) The Sisters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart who shared with the Marianites the initial years in Ville Platte were Sister Mary Albina, Sister Mary Jane Frances, Sister Mary Loretto and Sister Mary Alphonse-Marie.

This method of conducting the school with two religious communities under the direction of one Principal succeeded in the most astonishing fashion. The enrollment on September 5, 1938, was 160, 80 more than that of the previous year. The monotony of school routine was broken by many happy interruptions, the greatest of which was that of the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress sponsored by His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., Archbishop of New Orleans, in October, 1938. Another happy occasion was His Excellency's visit, Bishop Jeanmard of Lafayette, on January 31, 1939.

The very happy year of 1938-1939 closed with sincere regrets by both communities. The ties of sweet charity that bound the two communities had to be broken. Obedience called the daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart to their far-away Canadian Home; the Marianites took upon themselves the responsibility of this new mission. A farewell program was presented the departing Sisters by the pupils of the school. Amid sincere regrets and assurances of undying friendship, the Sisters parted; remembering as one said, "Distance and time mean nothing when one kneels before God's altar throne united with those they love."

The new scholastic term opened September 4 with an increased enrollment, the registration reaching the 300 mark. Mr. Robson, State Supervisor for Evangeline Parish, visited the Sacred Heart High School and expressed himself as being well pleased with the school, the equipment, and the teaching. The school was subsequently placed on the list of State-approved private schools by Mr. T. H. Harris, State Superintendent.

Prior to the advent of the Marianites, a Junior High School was the extent of the education offered, and regretfully the parents were obliged to discontinue the religious schooling of their children before graduation from High-School. It was then the work of the Marianites to establish a four-year High-School course, which they accomplished with very little difficulty, because of the excellent foundation laid by their predecessors.

The Right Reverend Monsignor Bourgeois and his active Assistant, the Reverend Irving A. De Blanc brought the school to the fore in every field of cultural development. A band was organized, which remains the mainstay of many civic organizations which enjoy its services on outstanding occasions. A football team was organized, which has won for itself a name as one of the first of the State obtaining for .itself twice (in the 1946 and the 1947 seasons) the title of State Champions. Again, oratory has received its honored due, and annual elocution contests give public recognition of splendid training. Sodality work received much attention, and in order to reach public school students, all meetings were held outside of class rooms. Two Sodality Oratorical Contests have been won by Sacred Heart pupils. In a Sodality Essay Contest, one of Sacred Heart's pupils was acknowledged the winner. Twice in recent years, the Senior class has been the holder of first place in the Evangeline Parish American History Contest; twice also in the same period has the Seventh Grade held the same title in their history division. Much interest has been evinced in 4-H Club work, which develops the student intellectually, morally, and physically, as well as preparing him for life in the home and on the farm. In 1946 the club in Valle Platte was declared best in the Parish, while in 1947 it carried off first honors on Achievement Day.

Appreciation of the school work accomplished by the Right Reverend J. Maurice Bourgeois was expressed in a special manner when in 1943 the Holy Father, at the request of Most Reverend Bishop Jeanmard, designated him as Domestic Prelate with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor. To those who have seen the uphill struggle he has had in making Sacred Heart Parish what it is today, this honor is justly merited.

Plans are on foot for the erection of a new High School, as well as gymnasium, and very generous offers of assistance have been given. One friend of Catholic education has offered all hauling facilities, cement, and other commodities in his line; while another, equally as generous has offered all the building blocks needed. Donations have been sent since the Bishop of the Diocese opened the Drive in January, 1947. Only the blessing of a Provident Hand could have made the work in this Vineyard of the Master as successful as it has been. Generously have the parents sacrificed their daughters, for five graduates of Sacred Heart High are now numbered among the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross:

Sr. Jean Marie Vianney, Dorothy Fontenot
Sr. M. of St. Albina, Dottie Belle Guillory
Sr. M. of St. Flavia, Lou Ella Reed
Sr. M. of St. Alcuin, Margaret La Fleur
Sr. M. of St. Maurice, Elsie Mae Vidrine

The Superiors of Sacred Heart Academy for the past ten years were

1938-1940	Sister Mary of St. Cecilia (Braud)
1940-1943	Sister Mary of St. Kieran (Aylward) (Deceased)
1943-1948	Sister Mary of St. Finian (O'Donovan).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

IN THE LAND OF LIVING FAITH

A MEMORABLE YEAR for the Marianites of Holy Cross was 1891. For besides being the year of the Golden Jubilee of their foundation in Le Mans, it witnessed the opening of a new mission. Not only during the twenty-eight years of existence did St. Joseph's at Arnaudville send daughter after daughter to be enrolled as Marianites, but even to the present day Arnaudville still retains its love for the Marianites, and the three young Marianites from Arnaudville prove that it considered it a most cherished honor to have its daughters clad in the habit of the Marianite Sisters.

The **Chronicles** of the House of St. Joseph give an account of the foundation:

> We arrived at this mission the twenty-eight day of December, 1891, and took possession of the Convent the same day. We had the happiness of being accompanied by our Mother Provincial, Mother Mary of St. Cesarea (McDonnell). We were three Sisters sent to this mission, two French and one English.
>
> The Convent was built by the Reverend Father Denoyel, Curé of this Parish, and founder of the two schools with the help of his good parishioners, for each and all have contributed to the erection of the Convent which is a new modern structure of two stories painted inside and out.
>
> Arnaudville is a very pretty village, situated at the junction of Bayou Teche and Bayou Fusille, in the Parishes of St. Landry and St. Martin, Diocese of New Orleans.[1]
>
> This Parish is served by the Very Reverend Pere Denoyel and the services are conducted in French. Everyone speaks French; very few, English.
>
> The population is almost entirely of French and Canadian descent. The number of inhabitants is about four thousands, all Catholics. The people are very industrious, and make a comfortable living by tilling the soil and raising cattle. The products of this place are principally cotton, corn, and rice.

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[1] At this date, Arnaudville was in the New Orleans Archdiocese, but was later part of the Lafayette diocese, which was created in 1918.

> Arnaudville citizens have preserved in an extraordinary manner the Catholic faith; this faith so living and so simple, which their forefathers have left them, is so grand that it is impossible to find its equal in any other part of Louisiana. The village has been and still is fortified by the example of a holy and devout priest, who is called Tres Reverend Pere Denoyel. For eighteen years he has exercised his holy ministry among these people.
>
> School opened January 4, 1891, with a registration of 25 boys and 24 girls. At the end of the month, the number was greatly augmented in both schools. The enrollment continued to increase so that during the first days of February the number of children became so great it was impossible for the Sisters to do justice to them. The Sister Superior was obliged to ask Mother Provincial for another Sister. The children of Arnaudville, as well as their parents, revere the Sisters, and we are able to say with pleasure that this first year the children have given much satisfaction by their good conduct and obedience.

Alas, the second and third years spent by the Marianites in Arnaudville were not so happy. On September 15, 1893, a colored school was opened in Arnaudville. The school was made possible by Mother Mary Catherine, Superior of St. Elizabeth Convent of the Religious of the Most Holy Sacrament, Archdiocese of Philadelphia. Mother Catherine furnished the money for the building. The school was opened, despite the opposition agitated by the "Regulators", an organization against the advancement of the Negroes, and it flourished for many years. Nevertheless, the opening days were eventful ones. Twelve colored children, seven girls and five boys, were brave enough to come to school the first day. The Sister in charge, Sister Mary of St. Martina, was threatened, and though she was of a most distinguished French family of Louisiana, having had in her own youth a special slave to attend to her special wants, she was fearless and persistent in her devotion to God's little outcasts. Gathering her little colored group about her, Sister seated herself in their midst on the front steps of the school, and awaited the appearance of the "Regulators." The noon hour was the time set for action. Masked men galloped by on horseback, cracking their whips in the air, yelling, whooping, and creating a great deal of noise. Soon they passed on without harming the Sister or her colored charges. The courage of one brave Marianite put these defenders of white supremacy to shame, but not to inaction.

On the twenty-second day of the same month, the eve of the feast of Our Lady of Seven Dolors, at half past eleven at night, the

Sisters were awakened by the cry, "Fire!" They asked the young man who was so lustily screaming, "Fire!", where was the fire? **"A l'ecole des negres,"** was the reply. Soon the Church bells were ringing, calling the villagers to the fire. Father Denoyel was heartbroken over the incident. Later his paternal heart was soothed to find out that the numbers perpetrating this piece of mischief were few, very few.

For two weeks the Catholic men of Arnaudville took turns keeping watch at the Convent. The good Superior laments the times in the following words:

> Nous avons ete pendant plusiuers semaines ou nous ne pouvions a peine prendre le repos qui nous etait necessaire, mais Dieu est bon, il n'abandonne pas celles qui ont quittes tout ce qu'elles avaient de plus cher au monde, parents et patrie pour le fair connaitre et aimer a un peuple ignorant et barbare et vivre dane un petit coin de bois ou une partie de la population est a peine civilizee.[2]

The colored school remained open. Sister Mary of St. Yves, the Superior, could not, would not, be intimidated.

It would be no true account of St. Joseph's at Arnaudville were Sister Mary of St. Yves not mentioned. This Sister, a native of Etables, Cotes du Nord, France, was the first Superior and most remarkable of all the Sisters who labored in Arnaudville. For nineteen years she devoted her time to these people who today reverence her memory as that of a saint. Like St. Paul, Sister Mary of St. Yves made herself all to all for Christ. It mattered little to this witty Frenchwoman whether she were teaching a French comedy, butchering a hog, giving instructions to her would-be gardener or caring for the cows. All was done for God. Her convent and the people of Arnaudville approached as near as possible to life as it was in the time of the Apostles: All things were held in common; food was shared by Sisters and villagers, irrespective of persons.

Now and then harmless pranks were played. Big popcorn balls were found to be rather dry, "le coton" filled their centers. Irrepressible Sister Mary of St. Yves thought nothing of inquiring in a department store for "half-past four shoes", (instead of size 4½) or for a pound of whuskey (worsted)!

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[2] For several weeks we have hardly been able to take the necessary rest, but God is good. He does not abandon those who have left all that they cherish most dearly in this world, parents and country, in order to make Him known and loved by a barbarous and ignorant people and to live in a little corner of a forest (woods) where a portion of the population is hardly civilized.

Sister dearly loved to air her English. Man, woman, and child loved Sister Mary of St. Yves. She shared their joys and sorrows for nineteen years, so their hearts were saddened when in 1911 they bid her goodbye.

An excerpt from Mother Mary of St. Raphael's account of her visit to Arnaudville in 1911 describes the Arnaudville of Sister Mary of St. Yves' time:

> I am happy to state that the pupils of these schools (Boys, Girls, and Colored children) show an extraordinary, devoted care on the part of their teachers, who labor with a disinterestedness worthy of all praise. Our dear Sisters have done splendid work in this remote district during the last twenty years. This is shown by the great number of their former pupils of both sexes, who frequent the Sacraments, and who are assiduous in practicing their holy religion. The good seed sown is bearing an abundant harvest; this is an ample reward for those who have so generously given themselves, body and soul, to the cultivation of this isolated field of labor. The promises give ample evidence of the industry and economy which caracterize the lives of our dear Sisters; while the privations, which are unknown to those of our Community in more central locations, are here borne with a commendable patience and cheerfulness.

In 1919 the Convent of St. Joseph was closed because of the depression which followed the first World War; also, because of a shortage of teaching personnel. The Congregation found it impossible to continue to supply teachers and at the same time maintain older established houses.

The Reverend Pastors of Arnaudville were:

Reverend J. B. Morin
Reverend Charles Denoyel
Reverend A. Maisonneuve
Rt. Rev. Mhgr. George Mollo
Reverend Anthony Verhoeven
Rt. Rev. Msgr. L. J. Canon Massebiau, J.C.D.
Reverend Daniel Bernard, present Pastor.

When Monsignor Massebiau became Pastor in 1933 his one ambition was to reopen the Catholic school, but the parish was not yet prepared. As His Excellency, Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard said in the address at the opening of the new school:[3]

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[3] Milton Wyble and Damas Noel were the two main carpenters who built the school. Damas Noel worked incessantly on it. There were other volunteers who gave much help.

> Monsignor Massebiau was the father of this idea. He prepared the ground and sowed the seed. He prepared the hearts of his people, by his own piety, example, and sacrifices, to make the sacrifice and to labor for the accomplishment of this school. Father Daniel Bernard, his spiritual son, brought the fruit to perfection by continuing this generous spirit among the people, finally undertaking the construction of the buildings.
>
> When Father Bernard asked my permission to build, I hesitated to give him permission because it was such a big responsibility and when you start such a project you need money, cooperation of the people, and not until Father Bernard had convinced me that he had both of these would I give him permission to go ahead.
>
> Father Bernard could have spared himself by simply building a new Church, but he realized the fact that the school and the convert were most necessary to keep the faith alive and to fill the Church. Although this required greater sacrifice, he zealously and courageously attacked the problem and succeeded gloriously with the help of his people in erecting this Catholic school and convent. He put all his energy and zeal into this Catholic school. Father Bernard relinquished his great desire of erecting a Church in favor of the Catholic school, because the school is the feeder of the Church. For example, A Catholic Bishop who had built a large Cathedral was once asked by a Protestant how was he to fill this large church. The Bishop answered by pointing to the Catholic school.
>
> Every priest knows that undertaking such a project means money, anxiety, and work. The French have a saying: "Batir, patir, et partir." "Build, suffer, leave." I know this will not be the case with Father Bernard, because your past co-operation has shown what your future response will be.[4]

Monsignor Massebiau said that he had seen promise in the present Pastor even when he served as a little altar boy. When Father Bernard was ordained, Monsignor asked for the young priest as his Assistant, and when the Monsignor's health caused him to retire he asked Bishop Jeanmard to appoint Father Bernard pastor. "I thank good Bishop Jeanmard of Lafayette for giving to the good people of Arnaudville this zealous priest who works in their behalf for the glory of God," were the closing remarks of Monsignor L. Canon Massebiau at the ceremony of dedication which marked a return of the Marianites of the Holy Cross to Arnaudville after an absence of 26 years.

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[4] Ceremony of dedication, Little Flower School at Arnaudville September 14, 1947, **Catholic Action of the South**, September 18.

The Most Reverend Bishop blessed the new school at Mass. Ceremonies for the dedication consisted of a procession of the Bishop and clergy from the house to the church, Mass, sermon, and talks after the Gospel and after Mass and procession to the school after Mass with altar boys, children, men, and women of the parish, the choir, Sisters and guests, and the clergy and the Bishop taking part.

The ceremonies closed with a formal blessing of the structure and the blessing of the throng by the Most Reverend Ordinary. The clergy attended a dinner in the rectory, while the Sisters were served by the women of the parish in the convent.

The new seven-room school, which opened with an enrollment of 200 students, accommodates students of the first five grades. Sisters Mary of St. Isabelle (Daigre) is Superior, assisted by Sister Mary of St. Theophilus (Noel) and Sister Mary of St. Alfred (Hardy). The latter two Sisters are natives of Arnaudville.

Reverend Ignatius Martin, Superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Lafayette, praised the teaching orders of religious which conduct the Catholic schools of the nation and told the laity that they were needed to give moral and financial support for the instruction of their children. He also remarked that the Catholic school system, stretching from kindergarten to the university, educates 3,000,000 youths and is erected and maintained without a penny of State aid. The priest called the Catholic school system the greatest moral factor in America.

Among the clergymen attending the ceremonies, besides the speakers were: Rev. George J. Braquet, pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Cecilia; and Reverend Fernando Roy, personal representative of Monsignor P. A. Borel, pastor of St. Bernard's church, Breaux Bridge; Very Reverend Warren Boudreaux, vice-chancellor; Very Reverend Peter O'Donnell, S.J., rector; Reverend Anthony Achee, S.J., Master of Tertians; and Reverend Ignatius Fabacher, S.J., Minister, all of St. Charles College, Grand Coteau.

Twenty-one Marianites from Arnaudville, Lake Charles, Opelousas, Ville Platte, Houma, and New Orleans attended the ceremonies.

The old school of St. Joseph yielded vocations to the religious life, but even during the years when there was no Catholic school in Arnaudville, the people there gave vocations to the Marianite Congregation. Among those attending the blessing were six of the eleven who have entered the Congregation from Arnaudville:

*Sr. M. of St. Leonide	Lucy Durio
*Sr. M. of St. Alyfred	Bernadette Guidroz
*Sr. M. of St. Collette	Eleonore De Kerlegand
Sr. M. of St. Benedict	Beulah Simpson
Sr. M. of St. Angela	Carmelite Melancon
Sr. M. of St. Theophilus	Celine Noel
Sr. M. of St. Agatha	Leonie De Kerlegand
Sr. M. of St. Louis	Vivian De Kerlegand
Sr. M. of St. Alfred	Rita Hardy
Sr. M. of St. Celine	Regina Noel
*Sr. M. of St. Daniel	Marie Louise Noel

Vocations to other Sisterhoods from among the natives of Arnaudville:

Sister Mary Andrew (Incarnate Word), Laurence Domec
Sister Mary Alice (Most Holy Sacrament), Helen Duplechin

Vocation to the Colored Sisterhood, the Sisters of the Holy Family—Sister Mary Martina, formerly Susan Green. Sister Martina is stationed at the Sisters of the Holy Family school at Opelousas, Louisiana. During the existence of St. Joseph's School for white students (1891-1919), the Marianites also conducted the colored school out of which came this vocation.

Vacations to the Holy Priesthood from Arnaudville were not wanting:

Aldus Guidry, S.J., (died a novice at St. Charles College, Grand Coteau)

Samuel Simpson (died a novice at St. Joseph's Abbey, St. Benedict, La.)

Reverend Daniel Bernard, Arnaudville's present Pastor, was a native of the town.

Clarence Hebert is studying at St. Benedict Seminary for the Holy Priesthood.

Summer catechetical schools have been conducted by the Sisters during the years 1942, 1944, and 1946. At the end of the session in 1946, Reverend Daniel Bernard promoted wide devotion to the Sacred Heart among his people, having the public ceremony of enthronement in all the homes in Arnaudville.[5]

The school building was barely made ready for use at the beginning of the school term. It had yet to be painted and waterproofed, but it was in condition for the holding of classes.

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*Deceased.

[5] Chronicles of the House in Houma.

The Sisters deemed as the greatest of all their blessings the fact that they had to live only one day in the new little convent without their Eucharistic King. On the day following, Reverend Father Bernard said Mass in the convent chapel, at which twenty-five people were present, some having to remain in the hall and parlor. On Saturday, July 12, His Excellency, Bishop Jeanmard, Monsignor Vigliero and two Incarnate Word Sisters paid a visit of welcome to the Sisters. On Sunday evening the parishioners welcomed the Sisters formally with such touching and affectionate sentiments that it made them feel very happy to be in Arnaudville. At this reception, Reverend Father Bernard promised his congregation that "never again would the Sisters be taken away, that he would leave first." A little boy expressed the sentiments of the children in the words, "At last our dream is realized and we have the Sisters."

The Sisters found their residence very comfortable, and conventual. They had moved into it before the "real roof" was on it, just a temporary roof, with doors from the old house serving until the new doors would arrive, such was their eagerness to get started in this field so promising for the glory of God and His holy Church. The liturgical altar in the convent chapel was made by Leon De Kerlegand, a nephew of Sisters Mary Agatha and M. of St. Theophilus. $200 was donated for this purpose by Mr. Phelan of Beaumont, Texas. It covered the cost of the material.

The Little Flower School employs one private school bus to be driven by William Wiltz, and has the services of five State school transports.

PART FIVE

THE INVIGORATING RAYS OF HOLY CROSS

"May begin from Thee . . ."

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

A MAZE OF TWISTING BAYOUS

THE TECHE COUNTRY of Southern Louisiana presents a unique view of American life. It is not easy to explain the very special charm of this land of the bayous and the lake; or to describe the greater charm of the Acadians.

History gives a partial answer. Approximately 4,000 Acadian French settled in Louisiana after they were dispersed from their Nova Scotia settlement in 1755. Over a period of thirty years they came in small groups, settling along Bayou Teche, Bayou La Fourche, and Bayou Vermillion, and in Plaquemines Parish below New Orleans.[1]

The Bayou Teche, which rises in central Louisiana, flows with patient rhythm into Grand Bayou, narrows between Berwick and Morgan City, and finally merges in the marshy and salty bay off the shores of Terrebonne Parish. The Bayou Teche gave peace, water, and brown soil to the early settlers. Those benefits the people there still enjoy, and for many generations the country has transformed in its transit from one racial melting pot to another, subtly molded the character of these people.[2] Their language sounds as lovely as it is at first difficult to understand; for it is a combination of French, Spanish, and sometimes Indian and English, a language made up of hybrid words of an Old-New-World dialect.

This is "the Evangeline country." "Through a maze of sluggish and devious waters" Longfellow led his famous **Evangeline** in this bayou country of Louisiana, of which Houma forms a part. The intricate system of meandering bayous surrounding Houma is itself a symbol of the devious struggles through which the Marianites of Holy Cross passed to establish their educational unit at Saint Francis de Sales Academy.

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[1] Catholic Digest, June, 1947, II, 85.

[2] Idem.

Romance, daring and heroism are identified with the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, and though it is a far cry from courers de bois, keelboats, and covered wagons to hackney coaches and steam-driven trains; nevertheless, romance, daring, and a **need of heroism** marked the pioneer efforts of the Marianites who left their Provincial House in New Orleans in 1870 to establish a mission in the land of Terrebonne. The Old Spanish Trail of yesterday differed greatly from the United States Highway of today. When the first Sisters left New Orleans at eight o'clock in the morning, they did not reach Houma until three o'clock in the afternoon. When their train arrived at Terrebonne station (now Shriever) the Sisters boarded a hackney coach to take them to their destination. Mother Mary of St. Eutychius, who accompanied the Sisters, and Sister Mary of St. Claire, directress of the mission, occupied the back seat; Sister Mary of St. Stanislaus, and Sister Mary of St. Sebastian shared the next seat; Sister Mary of St. Catherine took a position at the driver's back. A gentleman from New Orleans, Judge John Overton's son, shared the seat with both driver and Sister. Mr. Overton was exceedingly kind to the Sisters, and expressed great satisfaction upon learning their mission —that of extending Catholic education to the people of Terrebonne.

Upon reaching Houma, the Sisters graciously accepted the hospitality of Mrs. Valentine Berger and Mrs. Charles Daspit. That afternoon they went to see their future home. The Houma College, formerly operated as a protestant college, was an imposing two-story building with a large garret, surmounted by a solidly-built cupola with cross beams for the purpose of supporting a very large bell. Originally, there were twelve rooms. The perfectly-executed masonry concealed all evidence of the wreckage within. Every kind of destruction had been wrought on the interior; the walls, defaced; the roof decayed and neglected; the doors and blinds, broken; the fence, battered and weather-beaten, its main recommendation, its brave resistance to hurricane and tornado.

House-cleaning was the order of the day. Assisted by Mrs. Valentine Berger, Mrs. Tennent, three other ladies of Houma and two Negro men, the Sisters made good use of soap and water and "elbow grease." During the general clean-up, young Mr. Overton called upon the Sisters. Unhesitatingly, he offered his services, and attacked the heavy blinds which the Sisters were cleaning.

Nine acres of ground belonged to the college, and the greater part of it had no separation whatever from the surrounding country. Cattle came in at will, and neighbors drove horses into the front yard. It took brave, heroic souls, filled with a love of God, to undertake the rehabilitation of the college. These pioneer Marianites, by the grace of God, accomplished this. Strictest poverty's fare was their daily food; hard work, their constant companion; an unfaltering hope, their strongest ally, and an unwavering faith with their sustaining power in arduous undertakings.

But joys were intermingled with trials and hardships. The presence of the Blessed Sacrament changed this rude home to a Heaven on earth. In 1871, a temporary altar was erected and from Easter of that year Mass was said four times a week at the convent. Their beloved Spouse had come to stay with them, and a hundredfold recompense was theirs.

Human as well as divine consolations were enjoyed by the Sisters. The Archbishop of New Orleans, Most Reverend Napoleon J. Perche, D.D., paid them occasional visits, one in 1871; another, in 1872. On one of these visits, a grand illumination of pyrotechnic display was given in honor of His Grace by Mr. Joliet. The Sisters and the people, as well as His Excellency, marvelled at "the light of a thousand hues dashing in fantastic gleams through the lazy shadows of a starless night. The bursting rockets with their orbs and sprays of light were hailed by the glad voices of old and young."[3]

The school flourished through the years. On the opening day, October 11, 1870, there was an enrollment of 25 girls. Only girls were taught by the Sisters in those days. In 1871 repairs were made on the building. The first Fair for the Sisters was presented in 1872. The Reverend Pastor displayed the highest interest and generosity in the cause; while Mrs. Valentine Berger, Godmother of the convent, ably fulfilled the duties of Manager, the people of Houma, no less noble than their Pastor, lent their hearty cooperation.

Evidently, the Houma citizens loved and revered the Sisters, but it took the fire department to express this affection. On the seventh of April, 1875, they visited the convent, then under the title of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and treated the Sisters to a military salute. The Honorable President, Mr. J. P. Viguerie, testified in graceful eloquence, on the part of the company, its grateful appreciation of the work of the Marianite Sisters, and concluded by cheering them three times. On another occasion, the Houma fire department, accompanined by the Thibodaux fire department, marched to the convent, drawing their engine with them.

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[3] Chronicles of the House in Houma.

This engine is on display at the Cabildo in New Orleans, a memorial of other days when men had time and thought to revere those who stood for the noblest and the best in humanity.

Tropical storms from the Gulf of Mexico played havoc with buildings, trees, and vegetation. Pestilential swarms of mosquitoes ruined the day's work and the night's rest. Formidable arrays of spiders and snakes gave rise to other trials. Through all these circumstances, the Marianites passed and overcame them, combating the elements and local annoyances. They battled with years of fever, of crop failures, of scourges from God's hands, and from lack of human appreciation; yet out of these trials arose the present St. Francis de Sales Academy, an accredited State Institution serving the Catholics of Houma and the surrounding territory.

Manifold were the tests to which Divine Providence put His Marianites that their religious spirit might be rightly nurtured! None that they endured was more severe than that of the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1878, graphically chronicled by the Community's historian of that year.

> The grandest characteristics of the human heart have been brought out in bright relief during the dark days of pestilential reign. After the example of God Himself, men laid down their lives for their fellowmen and the dwellings of disease and want were lighted by angels of charity. The soldiers of the Cross, the Marianites, feared not to enter the lists to militate against a foe whose shafts sent thousands of the brave and the noble to a premature grave. They lived for God amidst the ghostly scenes of a terrible epidemic; they breathed the poisonous exhalations of putrified bodies in order to sooth the last moments of the dying and to carry consolation to their desolate homes.[4]

As with all things, the fever passed. and 1879 was to be remembered for joyous as well as tragic incidents, for this year witnessed the Houma Academy's first graduation exercises. Rosa Cune was the candidate for a diploma. The Mother Provincial, Sister Mary of the Passion, accompanied by Sister Mary of St. Cesaria, Sister Mary of the Desert, Sister Mary of St. Sebastian, examined the applicant, found her deserving of the honor and accordingly approved the conferring of graduation honors. 1879 is also memorable for the fact that the General Chapter of the Congregation held at Le Mans, France, changed the name of the Academy to St. Francis de Sales from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart as another foundation had been previously dedicated to the Blessed Virgin under the latter title.

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[4] Chronicles, St. Francis de Sales Academy, Houma.

The school session of 1880-1881 was a hard one for the Sisters in Houma. Continuous heavy rains and two severe snow storms seriously damaged the roof of the convent, that was none too strong. Financial resources were barely sufficient for the maintenance of the mission. Food, however, seemed to be plentiful. The crop, despite the bad weather, gave promise of success—an abundance of corn and sweet potatoes was in the fields, and several barrels of Irish potatoes were already harvested; yet, all was not as plentiful as expected. The worms and drought ruined the truck vegetables and cabbages so that the Sisters had to enjoy many a meal whose vitamin content was furnished by the starchy products of corn and sweet potatoes. The worst was yet to come.

Leaks from the roof caused the plaster to fall in dormitories, chapel, and hallways. As if in sympathy with the interior, the exterior took on a dilapidated appearance. Fences were down, weeds seemed to thrive more than ever; snakes, feeling at home, crawled out in broad daylight. This was the turning point. The reptiles invaded the building. One, found in the chapel, was killed; another crawled onto the gallery during recreation and in the room next to the kitchen, still another fell at the feet of a Sister who barely escaped its deadly sting. Now the house must be ceiled. The garret was floored, the chapel and the parlor repaired, and the roof and fences put in good condition. After sidewalks were made in front of the Academy, the convent became a much more impressive-looking edifice.

The appreciation of the residents of Houma was expressed by the **Houma Courier** of June 28, 1883:

> The annual exhibition of the Academy of St. Francis de Sales came off last Thursday evening. The entertainment was witnessed by a large and appreciative audience, who found themselves delighted with the excellently arranged programme and the admirable manner in which the pupils rendered their respective parts. The entire programme elicited much praise from all auditors, floral tributes falling upon the stage in utter confusion. The exhibition shows conclusively the progress made by the pupils, and the Sisters are to be congratulated upon the success they have attained.

The usual routine of the scholastic endeavors was consistently characteristic of the succeeding years at St. Francis de Sales. The year 1888 was an exception, for in that year the Catholics of Houma asked the Sisters to open a boys' school where their boys

1933. In the following year the classes were extended to the **Bayou country,** and two years later twelve or more Marianites were engaged in this religious instruction with centers at Raceland, Montegut, Boudreaux Canal and Chauvin. **A school for the colored and Indian children was conducted at Pointe aux Chenes.** Other Religious Vacation schools were established at Ashland, Coteau, Bayou Cane, Grand Caillou, La Cache, Bayou Black, and Daigleville. There are customs along the bayous not found elsewhere in Louisiana: Families visit all up and down the bayous. They walk, ride or go in pirogues (the Acadian's own type of canoe.) The "gallery," half in and half out of the house, is one of the accepted spots for entertaining friends. These people are hunters in season, and fishermen the rest of the year; some farm, driving wagons and plow with primitive farming implements. In many of the houses one finds only a rod, a gun, a spinning wheel, a loom and home-made furniture; yet, not so far up the road a farm as modern as the New World affords will be seen. Thousands of men fish for crayfish to make crayfish **bisque,** or, as it is known in the land of Evangeline, **gumo des crevirse.** The crayfish are caught in funnel-shaped nets of chicken wire, baited with catfish heads. The nets are spread out in the water and left for a day; then pulled up, loaded with crayfish. Frogs and oysters are only a little less important than shrimp to these people as a means of a livelihood.[7] These are the people whose souls and whose children's souls the "fishers of souls"—the Marianites—seek to catechize along the bayous.

Wholeheartedly sponsored by Mother Mary of St. John Berchmans (Houma), with the support of the Mother Provincial, Mother Mary Xavier (New Orleans) this work received additional impetus from the approval of the Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D. Religious Vacation schools are now spread throughout the Archdiocese.

At present steps are being taken to build a chapel at Daigleville which will be served by the Houma clergy. Since the beginning of 1947, the people of Coteau have enjoyed the privilege of assisting at Holy Mass on the first Saturday of each month. The Most Reverend Archbishop graciously granted the request of the Pastor, Right Reverend Monsignor Maurice Schexnayder to celebrate Holy Mass once a month in the little one-room school at Coteau. Those who attended will never forget that first Mass at 7:00 A.M. on Saturday morning. It was in the winter, and very dark. There was no electric light, so the first thing to do was to light the two Mass candles which Monsignor Schexnayder and the Sisters had brought along with other equipment necessary for the celebration of Mass.

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[7] Travel Magazine, January, 1947.

Shadowy figures lined up by the side wall to await their turn to go to Confession in the little cloak room where a temporary confessional had been hastily set up. The Sisters arranged the altar and vestments; the children sat at the desks; some of the older people used the few available chairs while others stood around. By the time confessions were heard and Mass started, the day began to dawn, and soon it was bright enough to read the prayers at Mass. Fifteen people received Holy Communion that morning.

The seed of Catholic education flourished, and the growth in the numbers of First Communicants in the twentieth century gives ample proof of its flowering:

Children enrolled as First Communicants:

In 1873........ 32
In 1882........ 63
In 1903........ 94
In 1934........200
In 1940........217

The Catholics of Houma wanted their boys to have the advantages of Catholic High-School facilities. A veteran champion of boys, Mother Mary of St. Berchmans (Quilter), initiated the project so that the following scholastic term witnessed the enrollment of the entire class of boys who had completed the Seventh Grade in June.

The year 1936 was eventful for St. Francis de Sales Convent and the people of Houma. On February 16, the cornerstone of a beautiful Flemish-Gothic structure, replacing the old St. Francis Church, was laid. For the first time the people had the happiness of meeting their distinguished Archbishop, the Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., who officiated. The day also marked the crowning glory of the saintly Father Augustus Vanderbilt's life. The laying of the cornerstone was proof that his new church was becoming a reality. But little did Father Vandebilt realize that his work was finished, for alas! the bells that pealed so joyously were on the not-too-far-distant date of April 9, 1937, to toll sadly for the death of Houma's most beloved father and friend. Houma need erect no monument to this holy man's memory, for the church that should call forth their descendants to a life of faith, and bring a lasting absolution to their dead stands as a memorial to one who sacrificed his most legitimate pleasures, even needs, that his people might have a Temple of God as nearly fitting as he, in his humble way, could make it. For over a quarter of a century this humble Hollander gave his life-service to the people of Houma, and Father Vanderbilt's funeral bore testimony of the realization and appreciation of his unstinted devotion. Ninety-two members of the clergy assembled to pay their respects to this most priestly of priests. Monsignori, religious and laity vied with one another to pay homage to Reverend Augustus Vanderbilt, the man and priest of God who in life had shunned all notoriety and honors. Houma was desolate, especially the "good Sisters" as Father Vanderbilt respectfully referred to them. Most Reverend Archbishop Rummel presided at the final Absolution.

Not always filled with dolorous content have been the days of the present century. Many were its moments of joy: On December 16, 1937, the music teacher at St. Francis de Sales Academy, Sister Mary of St. Norbert (Florence O'Bryan) was awarded first place for her composition of the National Eucharistic Hymn in the Diocesan contest sponsored by His Excellency, the Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., Archbishop of New Orleans. The following poem by Sister Norbert, when set to a prize-winning musical composition by a professor of Louisiana State University,[8] was sung during the Eighth National Eucharistic Congress in New Orleans (1938.)

NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC HYMN

Hosanna, glory, praise be Thine,
Oh Christ, our Sacramental King!
Our Sacrifice, our Bread Divine,
Oh, let our hearts exultant ring!
Hosanna in adoring praise
We lift our voices in accord,
The Church in love adoring prays
To welcome Christ, Eternal Lord!
Our National here on bended knee
From North and South, from West and East,
Sends praise and love in prayer to Thee,
On this our Eucharistic Feast.
Oh Lamb of God, our Life, our Way,
Great Prince of Peace, Sweet Sacred Heart,
Thy blessings to this world impart.
Oh, Mary's Son, to Thee we pray,

Chorus
Hosanna, Hosanna, Let the choirs of Heaven sing!
Hosanna, Hosanna, To our Eucharistic King!

May 15, 1938 was Eucharistic Day for the Deanery. A solemn outdoor procession, paying homage to our Eucharistic King, was magnificently carried out. A large decorated float, having an improvised altar, was drawn by loyal Christians through the streets of Houma from the church to the convent where, on the gallery, Benediction was given. The sight of sixty Holy Angels' society members, accompanying the procession, with the younger girls strewing flowers before their Eucharistic Lord, was especially edifying. Houma's older generation had an opportunity to note the changes wrought by comparing this celebration with the first Eucharistic procession in 1877.

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[8] Prof. F. Crawford Page.

Regarding these "Holy Angels," a well-preserved book found among the Academy's records brings to light the organization of the society in Houma:

> The year of Our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Seventy-six. On the first day of the month of the Holy Rosary, the society of the Holy Angels was established by the Marianite Sisters for the pupils of the Academy of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and the children of Houma.
>
> On the twelfth of November the members were received by the Pastor, Reverend Father Poyt, before Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. These members were Maggie Buron, Victoire Gouzux, Louise Gouaux, Selina Gouaux, Josephine Zeringer, Annie Zeringer, Josephine Viguerie, Annette Viguerie, Lydia Dupont, Clara Dupont, Caroline Kinderle, Alice King, Amy Menville, Bernadette Menville, Adele Bethancourt. . . .[9]

The present Holy Angels girls and the St. Aloysius boys are wide-awake groups in the school. It is inspiring to watch them approach the altar to receive Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month. Dressed in appropriate uniforms, they draw the attention of all when they take part in parish celebrations. These celebrations have been many. In 1941 Mother Mary of St. Berchmans, Superior of the Academy, celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her religious profession. The entire parish paid homage to Mother on that fiftieth anniversary. Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial of the Marianites, accompanied by many visiting Sisters, came to rejoice with the venerable Jubilarian. Just a year later, Sister Mary of St. Theodore, who is still at the Academy, celebrated her Golden Jubilee of religious profession.

During Mother Mary of St. Berchmans' administration, besides the establishment of the Boys' High School, other improvements were made. The convent was renovated and painted, classroom additions made, a commodious refectory and attractive shrines were constructed, and the grounds beautified. Mother Mary of St. Berchmans brought prosperity to St. Francis de Sales.

On July 25, 1943, the parish of Houma celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the ordination of their beloved pastor, Reverend Lucien J. Caillouet. Church dignitaries, as well as religious and laity, paid unanimous tribute to this priest of God, renowned as an outstanding civic and religious leader. So well was his worth known and appreciated that no parishioner was surprised when Father Caillouet, a few months later, was raised to the dignity of Domestic Prelate to His Holiness, Pope Pius XII, with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor.

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[9] Chronicles of the House of Houma, Louisiana.

Other honors followed quickly, and the people of Houma, with sad hearts, bade farewell to their beloved Monsignor when in June, 1946, the Archbishop called him to fill the office of Vicar General of the Archdiocese, an office left vacant when Monsignor Charles P. Greco, a former Assistant priest in Houma, was elevated to the Bishopric of Alexandria. In June, 1947, the year following Monsignor Caillouet's transfer, he received a higher honor—that of the title of Prothonotary Apostolic. His former parishioners rejoiced over the news of these well-deserved honors.

On Sunday, November 25, 1945, the grateful people of Houma paused in reverent appreciation of three quarters of a century of work done for God and Terrebonne Parish by the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross. His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D., Archbishop of New Orleans, was high in his praise of past accomplishments, and optimistic in his forecast of achievements yet to come, when he addressed the Congregation of St. Francis de Sales on the Diamond Jubilee Day.

> If today the people of Houma can point with pride to the deep religious faith of its Catholic population, to a well-recognized zeal in the practices of Catholic life and to a well-trained Catholic youth, the credit is in large measure due to the devoted Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross who have so consistently given themselves to the cause of Catholic training and education under the effective guidance of the parish priests.[10]

These were the opening words of the greeting sent by His Excellency, Archbishop Rummel, to the Marianite Sisters on the occasion of this Diamond Jubilee. Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial Superior, was an honored guest that day; and numbers of Sisters came to rejoice with their fellow religious throughout the celebration. The newly-organized St. Francis de Sales Alumni had charge of planning the Jubilee program under the direction of the Reverend Frederick Pooley, Assistant priest in Houma.

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[10] Address of His Excellency, Most Reverend Archbishop Rummel, S.T.D., November 25, 1945, in Houma, Louisiana.

The Mothers' Club of St. Francis de Sales was formed on November 9, 1939, at the request of Right Reverend Monsignor Lucien Caillouet, Pastor. The purpose of the club is first to bring Catholic parents into closer contact with one another, resulting in closer cooperation in furthering Catholic education; second, through an active club to solicit interest in the children's school work; third, to assist in a financial way in meeting pressing needs of the Academy which arise from time to time. During the nine years of its existence, the club has been consistent in carrying out its three-fold purpose under very efficient officers who are elected each year.

Turning from these happy memories, one peers into the future and anticipates the pleasant prospect of the erection of a new and greater Saint Francis de Sales Academy which will be undertaken just as soon as building conditions permit. Right Reverend Monsignor Maurice Schexnayder, Pastor, is laying well the plans that will convert dreams into realities. This reality will provide greatly enlarged and improved facilities to carry on the work of Catholic education on a much larger scale, to the added benefit of many more Catholic children and the progress and advancement of religion.

That the new building is a pressing need may be gleaned from the following enrollment data:

1870— 25 pupils
1880— 50 pupils
1895—145 pupils
1911—215 pupils
1920—300 pupils
1940 over 500 pupils
1947—740 pupils

In 1918, during the administration of Sister Mary of St. Catherine (Moss) the facilities of the Academy were adequate to take care of the enrollment. It was in that year that the boys were transferred to the old "college" building by the Church. They were taught by three Sisters who went to and from the Academy daily while five other Sisters took care of the girls at the Academy. 300 pupils were enrolled when the Academy celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1920. Over 500 pupils were registered in 1940 during the administration of Mother Mary of St. Berchmans. When school closed for the vacation in 1947, there was an enrollment of 740. During the 77 years of the Academy's existence as an educational institution, years replete with sacrifice, unselfishness, unswerving devotion and toil, the following Marianite Superiors have served the Community.

1870 Sr. M. of St. Claire
1876 Sr. M. of St. Scholastica
1879 Sr. M. of St. Columbia
1880 Sr. M. of St. Lydia
1881 Sr. M. of St. Agnes
1886 Sr. M. of St. Veronica
1890 Sr. M.of St. Agnes
1892 Sr. M. of St. Sebastian
1898 Sr. M. of St. Albina
1904 Sr. M. of St. Juliana
1908 Sr. M. of St. Catherine
1919 Sr. M. of St. Rosalie
1928 Sr. M. of St. John Berchmans
1941 Sr. M. of St. Lua
1947 Sr.M. of St. Victorine

St. Francis de Sales stands at the gateway of a new era. The beautiful and spacious convent property has been purchased for the parish by the Pastor, Right Reverend Monsignor Maurice Schexnayder. Plans are under way by the Building Committee to start the first unit of **the greater St. Francis de Sales Parish plant.** The first unit will be an elementary school to accommodate a thousand children. The building fund drive in process will be added to the steady income which must increase in order to meet the responsibility in regard to the Catholic education of Houma's children. Monsignor Schexnayder is sparing no effort to carry out the plans left for this purpose by his predecessor, the Right Reverend Monsignor Lucian J. Caillouet, P.A., V.G.

St. Francis de Sales Academy stands as a mute memorial of appreciation for the noble and generous souls of those Marianites who have given of their time, their labor, and their worldly goods to aid this fruitful work in Houma.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

BY THE BAYOU TECHE

THE ACADEMY of St. John the Evangelist, founded by the Marianites in the town of Franklin, Louisiana, in the year 1871, is the fifth permanent foundation of the Community. Franklin, the government seat of St. Mary Parish, was settled in its early days by French and Spanish adventurers who were pushing westward from New Orleans, and later by a number of Acadians, lured there by the stories of the section's great fertility.[1] Here there are many hills, swamps, coast marshes and prairies.

One of the many concerns of Most Reverend Napoleon J. Perche, Archbishop of New Orleans in 1870, as shown by His Grace's pastoral letters, was that of Catholic education. It is not surprising then for the Marianites to chronicle the fact that in 1871 the Archbishop, after making his round of episcopal visits, and after a visit to Franklin, on his return to the city, sent for the Provincial Superior of the Sisters and commanded the Marianites to take charge of a mission in Franklin. His Grace told them that if they were unable to purchase the building, it would be retained in the name of the Archdiocese until such time as they would be able to purchase it.

The Sisters respectfully informed His Grace that they were unable to take charge of another school that year, remarking that their number of Sisters was insufficient to staff the houses already established. They added that they would have to obtain permission of the General Superior and her Council before establishing any new foundation, and that they could not consent to take the mission until they were able to write the Mother General for her approval. His Grace, Archbishop Perche, would not listen to their remarks, saying this was a matter which brooked no delay; that he, himself, would write immediately to the General Superioress, stating that the case was urgent. The Marianite Superiors saw clearly that it was their duty to obey this command of the Most Reverend Archbishop. They prepared for their first mission in the Teche country.

On Monday, October 31, 1871, Mother Mary of St. Eutychius, accompanied by Sister Mary of St. Stanislaus, Sister Mary of St. Agnes, as Directress, Sister Mary of St. Paula and Sister Mary of St. Catherine, arrived. They were welcomed by the Reverend Marthurin Harnais and many influential citizens, Protestants as well as Catholics. They went first to the residence of Father Harnais where they partook of a carefully and daintily prepared supper, and then proceeded to their future home, a two-story frame building which had formerly served for a Methodist seminary.

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[1] Laney, (editor) **Do You Know Louisiana?**, p. 178.

Father Harnais had tried his best to make the place habitable by personally superintending the cleaning of the house and the adjusting of the furniture. The building had been vacant for some time previous, and needed many repairs. Doors were without locks. There were no conveniences whatsoever. The Sisters improvised washstands by using rough boards covered with newspaper.

The morning after their arrival, the Sisters began a general housecleaning, working from early morning until late at night, as school was scheduled to open on the following Monday, just five days off. By the end of the week the convent and the school both had assumed an air of cleanliness.

By the fourth of November, St. John's convent was ready for the blessing of Holy Mother Church. It was a beautiful ceremony, which deeply impressed those assembled for it. All who were to participate gathered in front of the Church. Thirty little girls, dressed in white, carrying a banner on which was painted an image of the Immaculate Mother, led the procession. After the children, came the Sisters, followed by the parishioners. Last in order were the acolytes, the cross bearer, Reverend Father Harnais, and the three visiting priests, Father John James Ponchon, Father Gustave A. Rouxel, Father Hyacinth M. Lecozic.

The procession halted when it reached the convent yard. A platform had been erected between two beautiful oak trees. Reverend Gustav Rouxel (later Auxiliary Bishop of New Orleans) gave an inspiring sermon, setting forth the blessing of an education and congratulating the people of Franklin on the priceless advantage they were about to enjoy in having a Catholic school in their midst. He urged them to place their children under the care of the good Sisters who were cultured and educated women.

At the close of Father Rouxel's exhortation, the blessing of the convent and school began. Reverend Father Rouxel was accompanied by the sponsors, Mr. O'Niell and Mrs. Gibbons, through every part of the building, as Father read from the ritual common for the blessing of dwellings. The Institution was placed under the patronage of St. John the Evangelist, and was hence forth to be called the "Academy of St. John."

Mother Mary of St. Eutychius had spent Saturday arranging a room to be used as a chapel. She remained with the Sisters until Monday afternoon, as Mass was to be offered that morning for the first time in the tiny chapel, which Mother wished to be a fitting dwelling place for Christ, our Eucharistic King. After Mother Mary of St. Eutychius and Sister Mary of St. Stanislaus (Leigno) had bade farewell to the little pioneer band, a wave of homesickness engulfed these brave women. With fortitude and courage, they sought and received consolation in the chapel where Our Lord waits to bestow His benedictions upon those who seek them.

In this dilapidated building, the Sisters were naturally frightened; but when bolts were placed on the doors and the windows, a feeling of security returned. Happiness and prosperity enveloped the little mission. The first scholastic session opened with eighteen pupils, including one boarder.

Each night the Sisters would take all precautions against intruders. Their fears were now augmented by a circumstance which had occurred a few days prior to their departure from New Orleans, of which they were not aware until then. A malicious individual in Franklin had written two anonymous letters, one to the Lady Superior of the Sisters of Holy Cross; the other to the Most Reverend Archbishop of New Orleans; the **Propagator**, the Diocesan newspaper, quoted the letter:

> We have written to your nuns saying that we did not want them here and preparations are going on to receive them. Are you insane, Sir? Do you want those women to be insulted? Sell your convent or keep it for a seminary for your priests, but no Catholic school here; we are Methodists.
>
> A second letter to the Superioress reads:
>
> As we do not want war with women, we have decided to let you know that we do not want any Catholic school here. If you come here you will be insulted, treated as enemies and maybe more. Beware!
>
> If you have any consideration for the priest of Franklin, be silent about this letter for if he speaks of it, he will suffer. We are Methodists and do not want you here.
>
> Both of these letters were signed, "Enemies."

The Superior, upon receiving the letter was greatly alarmed. At first, it was thought to be the work of some Methodists. This was a false idea. It was later discovered that the letters were written by an individual connected with a school in Franklin. This individual thought that his interests would suffer should a Convent be opened. He wished to frighten the Sisters. The Methodists of Franklin were indignant when they found that the writing of the letter was attributed to them. The people bore friendly feeling towards the Sisters, and evinced it in a practical way. They sent their children to the Sisters' School. As a compensation for the insult offered the Sisters, a letter expressive of the sentiments of respect and loyalty with which the Catholics of Franklin held the Sisters was written by Mr. Lanaux and published in one of the New Orleans papers. This letter assured the Sisters that every protection would be afforded them. Peace and tranquility soon quieted their every fear and at the close of the first scholastic year sixty pupils were in regular attendance. Two-thirds of that number were Protestants. Franklin was living up to her traditions. Confidence on the part of the teachers and pupils formed links in the chain that bound the two together. The second year of the school's existence proves the confidence the people placed in the Sisters by the return of their children to the Academy.

Many new scholars were registered for the 1872-1873 session. The new Superior, Sister Mary of St. Francis, saw that the much-needed repairs to the building were made, and that the fences were renovated. She saw that the damp over-shaded playgrounds were not healthful. Some of the trees were cut down in order to give light, air, and sunshine. The cut timber was used for fuel.

In 1873 the school bell was consecrated, and named "Rene" out of respect to the donor, Reverend Mathurine Harnais, "Eutychius" for the Mother Provincial who had opened the school; and 'Arthur" for the Godfather, Mr. Arthur De la Houssaye.

Like a thief in the night, the great inundation of 1874 devastated the whole country. Plantations were ruined, and planters impoverished. This, of course, affected the convent, as the students were unable to continue their scholastic year. Amid the sorrow came a great joy: two of the pupils were converted to the Catholic Faith and were received into the Church.

In 1887 the town was visited by an equinoctial storm. Large trees were uprooted and the convent fence was blown down. It was in this year that yellow fever spread terror throughout the town. A quarantine was established in Franklin against New Orleans, and the Sisters were prevented from going there for their annual retreat at the Provincial House. Notwithstanding all precautions, the fever spread throughout the State. The inhabitants of Franklin were frightened; homes were barricaded so that no one could enter or leave. The school suffered as parents were afraid to send their children.

Sister Mary of St. Margaret of Cortona (Haggerty) arrived in Franklin in December 1877 to assume charge of the Academy. On the day of her arrival, Mr. Devlin, a resident of Patterson, presented to the Academy a beautiful oil painting of Our Lady of Sorrows, which now adorns the altar of the convent chapel. Mr. Devlin had on several occasions been very generous to the Sisters. His gift was a valuable one, and is considered a treasure by the Community.

September 1, 1879 was a day long to be remembered by the community of Franklin. As it was customary to open school with Mass in honor of the Holy Ghost, all preparations had been made for the student body to assemble at the convent and to walk in procession to the Church. About 12 o'clock the night previous the wind arose and there was every indication of an approaching storm. The indications increased in violence towards morning, and it was with great difficulty that the Sisters made their way to Church through wind and rain. More than once during the Holy Sacrifice, the timbers of the Church creaked and strained as those of a ship struggling in a mighty storm. Around nine o'clock that morning, the tempest had attained its full force. It blew from the East with all the fury of a hurricane, and before an hour had passed, the fence, kitchen,[2] chimneys and lightning rod had been swept away. Trees were uprooted and the whole place presented a scene of desolation. At ten minutes of eleven, the Church, one of the neatest in the country Parish of Louisiana, was a heap of ruins, and the town of Franklin a ruined waste. The sugar crop was materially damaged, and only two sugar houses were left standing in St. Mary Parish. While there was a lull in the storm, several of the citizens made their way to the convent to inquire how the Sisters had fared and to offer what assistance they could give to relieve their anxiety. The calm did not last long. At 11:30 the velocity of the wind increased, and the Sisters expected momentarily that the convent would be swept away. Their hope was placed in the protection of God, not in the strength of the building. So great was the violence of the storm that the bolts on the doors were bent. A week passed before the floors dried and school could be opened.

This disaster had impoverished many. When yellow fever was reported again, a general panic seized the people. The fever and the storm tended to reduce the number of students and boarders; but with the help of God, the Sisters surmounted all difficulties.

From 1877 to 1881 were years of plenty for Franklin. The crops were good, so many rich planters sent their daughters to the Academy. Then came the violent and contagious epidemic of 1881. In February, 1882, came the threat of one of the periodical overflows that submerge the fairest portions of the Mississippi Valley. In March, the Mississippi river forced its surplus waters through several **crevasses** (breaks in the levees)[3] and on April 12, the waters of the Teche had risen so high that the school had to be closed.

The following Fall, when school had been open only for a month, a most destructive fire occurred in the sawmill yard behind the convent premises. This October 8, 1883, is remembered for the special act of Divine Providence which saved the convent. The sawmill was destroyed. Piles of lumber were consumed by the flames, and the convent was in imminent danger, but God willed otherwise.

In 1896 Sister Mary of St. Margaret was called to the French

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[2] The kitchen was a detached building.

[3] Along the banks of the Mississippi the mud is built up in mounds to protect the towns from an overflow of the river.

Mother House for the General Chapter at which the Superiors are elected. Sister Mary of St. Robert (Mary Looby) was sent to replace her. Mother Mary of St. Margaret (Haggerty) returned to Louisiana as Provincial Superior. Our Reverend Mother Mary of Seven Dolors (Gascoin), affectionately called "Mother Foundress," accompanied by Mother Mary of St. Margaret, visited Franklin during that year. A reception was tendered Mother Foundress by the pupils of the Academy. She was well pleased with the work of the Sisters.

As a contrast with the present-day girl's wardrobe, the description of what would be required of the boarders gained from an old **Prospectus** of St. John's Academy is amusing:

> No particular kind of dress is required, except on Sundays. The uniform consists of green merino for winter; for summer, a white muslin.
>
> The trimming for the hats changes according to the two seasons. All that is requisite for these can be furnished by the Institution.

So simple was life in the Reconstruction Era! Enviable sighs might be uttered by the modern mother were she to read the fee for Board and Tuition of those early days—$20 per month![4]

In 1888 another storm devastated Southern Louisiana. Franklin was in the pathway of the furious elements. The Sisters were in New Orleans making their annual retreat. All telegraphic communications had been cut off, and there was no way in which the Sisters could learn the fate of the convent. When they did return to the Academy, a scene of disaster met their gaze. It required two weeks of hard work to make the place habitable.

In 1894 Sister Mary of St. Antonine (Mary Ellen Brown) was appointed Superior of St. John's Academy. She remained in this capacity for twenty-six years, endearing herself to the people of Franklin. A letter from one of Franklin's most progressive citizens gives a tribute to Sister Antonine's years spent in Franklin:

> As I remember, Sister Antonine was a most charming and accomplished lady. She had a gift of drawing the people to her assistance when needed. She is principally remembered for her especially fine work in school exhibitions and entertainments. She has not been excelled locally in these items. Her remarkably fine choirs, especially during the "hey days" of the Tarlton family, will ever be remembered here.[5]

Nothing eventful happened until 1897, when again the rumor of yellow fever was spread. Franklin became "a deserted village" over night. School had been opened just a month, and with the advent of this dreadful fever, it was impossible to keep the children from returning home.

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[4] **Prospectus** of St. John Academy in Archives of Provincial House, New Orleans, Louisiana.

[5] Letter from Mr. Charles A. McCarthy, Franklin, Louisiana.

On October 1st classes were resumed. That very night the Sisters were awakened by the terrible cry of "Fire!" They rushed from their respective apartments and beheld the sawmill in the rear of the convent in flames. The roof of the convent was a sheet of fire and the Sisters felt that their loved home was doomed. The convent bell was rung, and the good citizens of Franklin responded immediately. A picture of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart was placed on the gallery facing the fire. It was surely a miracle,[6] for the wind turned as the Sisters were interceding with our Blessed Mother. Their confidence was amply rewarded. The flames were controlled and the convent was saved.

Yellow fever again came as an unwelcome visitor in August, 1898, and claimed one victim. Consternation prevailed. The dreaded quarantine loomed up before the Sisters, and with it came the knowledge that they would be deprived of going to New Orleans for their retreat. As God demanded the sacrifice, they resigned themselves to His Will.

In 1907 a wing was added to the Academy, the chapel was renovated and enlarged, and a building was erected for the Elementary School.

Sister Mary Xavier (Haggerty) was appointed Superior at St. John's in 1920. As a child, she had been a boarder at the Academy. During Sister Mary Xavier's term (1920-1927) in Franklin the Academy was once more remodeled and repaired. A fondly-cherished hope was also realized—that of establishing the Sodality of Our Lady. Twenty sodalists, a comparatively small number, formed the first group; but with the help of God, the sodality has exerted a powerful influence over the hearts of Franklin girls.

Sister Mary Xavier saw that something had to be done to accommodate the increasing number of boarders. She began to devise ways and means of enlarging the convent. A third story was added and many other improvements were made.

In 1921 the Convent celebrated its Golden Jubilee in a very fitting manner. Katherine Stirling, an Alumna, delivered the address for the school. It was a memorable event for many in Franklin, as it touched the very hearts of its people. The convent hall and campus were decorated with palms, fern and yellow and white chrysanthemums. Many visiting clergy graced the occasion, and speeches were made by a number of prominent men.

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[6] In obedience to the decrees of Urban VIII of March 3, 1625, and June 16, 1631, and to other similar Pontifical legislation, the authors in no way intend to anticipate the decision of the supreme ecclesiastical authority for the above supernatural favor.

In November of 1923, Sister Mary Xavier, who had many friends in Franklin, decided to organize St. John's Auxiliary to aid in financial endeavors. Mrs. Henry Burguieres was named the first president, and it was during her time of office that the name of the club was changed to that of St. John's Co-operative Club. The Co-operative Club has aided the Academy both materially and financially, and the Marianites of Holy Cross will ever owe them a debt of gratitude and prayer. The presidency of the Club through the years, with the number of years' service follows:

Mrs. Henry Burguieres	1½	Mrs. L. S. McAnally	2
Mrs. A. W. Grillet	5½	Mrs. Herbert Ibert	2
Mrs Nellie Talbot	2	Mrs. Hypolite Bodin	2
Mrs. J. C. Blevins	2	Mrs. Agnes Bodin	2
Mrs. A. C. Kappel	2	Mrs. Betty (W. J.) Shinn	4

A charter member of the Club, Mrs. William Grillet, stated in a letter:

> Our work is to foster and to encourage Christian education. This Club has played a large part in putting St. John's Academy on the accredited list of schools. We also have helped and are helping the Sisters to defray expenses. Each year, for many years, we have given a May Festival. For the past few years we have given a fair in January to obtain funds to carry on our work. Most of the funds obtained from these benefits are used to help the Convent and the Sisters.

All poor children are given medical and surgical care, and the Club helps a great deal in this work.

> Sister Mary Xavier (Mother Xavier now) was always a great inspiration to the members of the Club. She was always eager and willing to help us carry on. We have kept together all these years, and hope to do so for many more years. It is her guiding light that still beckons us to accomplish great things for St. John's.

In a letter from Charles A. McCarthy further recollections of the '20's are gleaned:

> Sister Mary Xavier had many friends here. She was noted for her diplomacy and splendid ability in conducting the Academy. Her work in enlarging the school building, and handling the financial end of the improvement, is outstanding; her Jubilee celebration of St. John's Academy is still talked of after twenty years.
>
> Sister Mary Xavier was a most capable administrator, having brought St. John's safely through the most trying years of its

> history from a financial viewpoint. The convent took on a more modern atmosphere during her time. To her also must be given the credit for establishing the new school for boys in the old "Milling Home," the forerunner of the magnificent "Hanson Memorial." Few knew the hardships and trials of the Sisters in those days, and not the least of these was the problem of transportation of the teachers to and from the Boys' School in bad weather before the good roads and the time of the automobile. No doubt you have record of these incidents in the official records of St. John's Academy. I know of no other incident worthy of mention. These Sisters were so wrapped up in their Holy Profession, they were too busy to make history of the kind needed for a survey.[7]

On October 8, 1927 Sister Mary Xavier was named Provincial Assistant, Local Superior and Principal of Holy Angels Academy at New Orleans. Although her many friends of Franklin rejoiced at the great honor that was conferred upon Sister Mary Xavier by her Community, it was indeed with deep regret that they parted with one who had won the esteem and admiration of the entire Parish. In a farewell, addresses were delivered by Reverend Father Rousseau, Mrs. Grillet, President of the Club, and by members of the Senior class.

Just three years later, January 16, 1930, the people of Franklin and the Sisters, especially, were grieved to hear of the death of dear Sister Mary of Antonine. Sister had worked twenty-six years at St. John's, and was believed by all the Catholics and non-Catholics of the town. Katherine S. Stirling, one of St. John's Alumnae, started a movement for the erection of a memorial window in the Church of the Assumption, to Sister Antonine's memory, but death claimed this talented Alumna before she was able to realize this project, which would have been a fitting testimonial of appreciation.

In 1932 Sister Mary Xavier was elected Provincial Superior of the Louisiana Province and has guided the Community capably and wisely since then.

A storm similar to that of 1888 passed through Franklin in 1934. Many homes were wrecked, and telegraph communications were interfered with, and the convent roof was badly damaged. Even though it was depression time, the people of Franklin came to the aid of the Sisters, and the "Pieta", the statue of Our Lady of Sorrows, on the campus was erected in thanksgiving.

Seventy-five years have passed over this beloved institution. Again St. John's finds itself too small for the growing student body. The present St. John's will have to give way to a more spacious and up-to-date building equipped with modern improvements.

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[7] Letter from Mr. Charles A. McCarthy.

St. John's has kept apace with the years, and ranks today with the best institutions of learning in Louisiana. Its faculty takes a just pride in the fact that pupils who have gone forth from the Academy's portals have wielded an influence for good.

Those who served St. John's as Superiors are listed from 1871-1948:

1871-1872—Sister Mary of St. Agnes (Fant)
1872-1874—Sister Mary of St. Francis de Sales (Haggerty)
1874-1876—Sister Mary of St. Philomene (McCauley)
1876-1877—Sister Mary of St. Praxeda (Powers)
1877-1879—Sister Mary of St. Albert (Carroll)
1879-1886—Sister Mary of St. Margaret (Haggerty)
1886-1891—Sister Mary of St. Robert (Looby)
1891-1893—Sister Mary of St. Agnes (Fant)
1894-1920—Sister Mary of St. Antonine (Brown)
1920-1927—Sister Mary of St. Xavier (Haggerty)
1927-1928—Sister Mary of St. Justin (Neubig)
1928-1929—Sister Mary of St. Vincent Ferrer (Hiriart)
1929-1930—Sister Mary of St. Rose (Trepagnier)
1930-1932—Sister Mary of St. Vincent Ferrer (Hiriart)
1932-1938—Sister Mary of St. Francis de Sales (Dunn)
1938-1944—Sister Mary of St. Ursula (Bailey)
1944-1948—Sister Mary of St. Francis de Sales (Dunn).

St. John's Alumnae has given thirteen of its members to the services of Christ in the Marianite Community:

Sr. M. of St. Lucy—Anna Adotto.
Sr. M. of St. Bartholomew—Mary Adelaide Poteet.
Mother M. Xavier, Provincial Superior—Margaret Mary Haggerty.
Sr. M. of St. Cecilia—Melinda Aimee Braud.
Sr. M. of St. Alexis—Pieusse Pousson.
Sr. M. of St. Bernard—Viola Pecot.
Sr. M. of St. Hilary—Ellen Bodin.
Sr. M. of St. Peter Damien—Catherine Nacol.
Sr. M. of St. Cletus—Agnes Guidry.
Sr. M. of St. Louis—Vivian de Kerlegand.
Sr. M. of St. Claude—Eula Henry.
Sr. M. of St. Alfred—Rita Hardy.
Sr. M. of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini—Merle Shields.
Sr. M. of St. George—Mary Pusateri.
Sr. M. of St. Austin—Brenda La Bauve.

May the Holy Spirit, Who directed their steps, also guide others into the paths of Holy Cross.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

ON THE SHORES OF BERWICK BAY

WHERE THE Bayou Teche narrows between Berwick and Morgan City, is located the Community's seventh permanent mission, the Sacred Heart Academy. The planning of Morgan City has been well described by the Rotarians in a pamphlet issued some years ago:

> The founders of this community planned it with care, well laid out, including a city park, a playground, an athletic park, picnic grounds on the shore of beautiful Lake Palourde, a picturesque bayou forming its southern boundary line, and the main street fronting Berwick Bay with its endless marine activities. This City makes a completely charming and interesting place in which to live or to visit.

Morgan City as a "corporate town" dates from 1860, by an act of the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana, passed March 8 of that year. It was then called "Brashear City." A Catholic Chapel was fitted out, measuring 16 x 30 feet, and was placed under protection of the patron St. Justin, martyr. Reverend Justin Joseph Claris, then parish priest of Chacahoula and Bayou Boeuf, celebrated Mass there. During the night of June 6, 1859, this chapel was destroyed by malicious fire, and the town was deprived of a church until 1867. During that time the town was visited at intervals by various priests in charge of Bayou Boeum or Thibodaux, among which were Reverend Fathers Pineau, Urguain and Letilly.

In 1868 Reverend Claude Favre, Assistant at Thibodaux, aided by a committee of gentlemen, Messrs. McCready, Carr, Vitteman, Laforest and Joret, opened a subscription, and built St. Clothilda's Church measuring 22 x 40 feet on the south side of Railroad avenue, on a lot bought the previous year of Walter Brashear by Most Reverend Jean Marie Odin.

A new charter was drawn in 1876, all former acts were repealed, and the name of the town was changed to Morgan City in honor of Charles Morgan, the owner of the railroad who had conferred many benefits on the community.

The railroad bridge, 1,700 feet long over Berwick Bay, was built in 1882. Later on it was replaced by a more modern concrete and steel bridge. In 1882 came the most destructive high water this section had ever experienced; the water was so high that schooners plied the streets of Morgan City and sailed to the spot where the church stands. After the high water, the Pastor, Reverend Father Mathurin Chapin, was changed, and Reverend Thomas Smith took charge in October, 1883. He enlarged the church of St. Clothilda and on the fifteenth day of August, 1885, he solemnly blessed it, changing the title to that of the "Sacred Heart of Jesus." This church was overturned by a storm in September, 1888, but immediately replaced on its foundations, though it never was safe afterwards.

In 1893, Reverend Thomas Smith, aided by a group of energetic Catholic women, the forerunners of the modern enterprising group, the Parent-Teachers Association of today, erected a convent and placed it in charge of the Sisters Marianites of Holy Cross. Lovingly did the following ladies plan the religious, intellectual and moral education of their children:

Mrs. O. Ditch, President of the Altar Society;
Mrs. J. F. Prohaska, Treasurer;
Miss Annie Smith, niece of the Pastor, Secretary;
Mesdames John Dalton, Daniel Lynch, J. H. P. Wise, and A. Grevemberg.

Impelled by the realization that all education pre-eminently belongs to the Church, and that the social order, as well as the public welfare of Morgan City demanded that measures be taken to supply such an educational system to the youth of their town, these ladies planned a school of the type that would make such essentials as morals, culture, and patriotism part of its component unit—such was their aim, and such did they accomplish after the manner in which they executed all projects. A Committee composed of Mesdames John Dalton, Thomas Shannon, and Daniel Lynch were sent to New Orleans to arrange with the Provincial Superior for the Marianites to take charge of the proposed school. Arriving at Holy Angels Academy, they made known the object of their visit to Mother Mary of St. Cesaria, Provincial Superior, who graciously acceded to their wishes.

Stimulated by success, these ladies proceeded immediately to obtain permission from His Grace, the Most Reverend Francis J. Janssens, Archbishop of New Orleans, for the establishment of the proposed school. His Grace, like the Marianites Provincial, readily granted the permission so earnestly sought.

Elated by their twofold success, these active workers started on the work of collecting funds, preparing plans. Other enthusiastic members, not so fortunately situated, being deterred from participating in the project aided the cause by substantial subscriptions. Names on this honor roll are Mesdames William Costello, R. Natali,

N. Francioni, C. Joret, P. Chotin, S. Lanaux, B. F. Winchester, E. Delaney, C. Cross, D. Beadle, and J. Dyer.

The ladies were enthusiastic over the good work already accomplished, and happy over the prospects of still greater work to be achieved within the near future. Quickly they delegated a committee to purchase the ground for the convent. Not content with what they had accomplished, they had the site fenced in, had a kitchen and a refectory built, and a covered walk to the convent.

Possibly it is due to these ladies' good planning, to their undaunted efforts to get a convent in their midst, supported by the prestige which was theirs as religious and civic leaders of the town, that the convent of the Sacred Heart at Morgan City was spared many of the trials that attended the foundation of other missions.

The new convent was blessed Sunday, July 23, 1893, by His Grace, the Most Reverend Francis Janssens, Archbishop of New Orleans, assisted by Reverend Thomas Smith and several priests from neighboring parishes. The convent was placed under the protection of the Sacred Heart. September 2, 1893, five Marianites accompanied Mother Mary of St. Cesaria, their Provincial, to prepare for the opening of school two days later. An encouraging enrollment gave evidence of the support enjoyed from the people at large.

At the convent the girls were taught, while in an old building at the extreme corner of the Catholic Church lot the boys had their school. This school had been erected by the Reverend Mathurin Chapin in 1878. Very shortly this building proved inadequate. Plans for the erection of a new boys' school were made immediately, carried out in schedule time, and the building was ready for occupancy for the 1879 school session. The outstanding characteristics of the Morgan City people seem to be the ability to recognize a need and to supply it.

Reverend Thomas Smith, being in his eighty-seventh year, resigned in 1895, and soon afterwards died. Reverend Father Holgreve replaced him in Patterson, as parish priest, and Reverend John Reiter was sent to Morgan City. After seven months Reverend H. F. Chastel followed these two but remained only a little over two years when in 1898 the Reverend A. Souby was appointed by His Grace, the late Archbishop Chappelle. During the first years of Father Souby's administration the church grounds and presbytery were improved at the cost of several thousand dollars, all at his own expense. As the church was unfit for divine service and dangerous to life, Father Souby set about raising money to build a new one. It took four years (1898-1902) to raise the necessary sum. On October 9, 1902, His Grace, Bishop Rouxel, blessed the cornerstone at a religious ceremony which was considered the grandest ever witnessed in that parish. In 1905, though the church was still incomplete, as regards the steeple and the interior, it was opened for divine service. Mass was offered by Archbishop Chapelle on Pentecost Sunday June 11, 1905. 220 were confirmed at this time.

With the cutting of a deep water channel at the mouth of the Atchafalaya river, Morgan City rose to the front rank amongst those towns of its size in Southern Louisiana.

Trappers by the hundreds work for the big leasing companies which control miles of swamp territories where the muskrats live and breed. Shrimp fishing centers also at Morgan City, and the airplane, our modern food purveyor, is placing Morgan City shrimp on northern tables in record time.[1] But in the antebellum days in Morgan City the means of transportation was not the airplane; rather, it was by vehicles unknown to the present generation: **La Charette a Boeufs,** ox-carts, were used to convey the women and the children to Mass on Sundays, the father or one of the grown-up boys acting as driver, while the other male members of the family went on horseback. On the ox-cart were also carried the chairs, on which the worshippers had to sit during divine service. These chairs were homemade, covered with untanned hide. With the building of the new church, pews were introduced and the capacity of the church enlarged.

Morgan City as an average American town wanted an average American school. The need was met with full zest. Life here seems to be centered about the one thought of fulfilling duty, without thought of self, but with vision and thought of the future needs. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the Parish priest getting ready with the aid of his parishioners and the members of his Altar Society to project some new enterprise. In 1901 the task was the erection of a school to care for the religious education of the children of Berwick, just across the bridge from Morgan City. The Pastor, Father Souby of happy memory, was placed in charge of it, and ably succeeded. On September 15, 1901 St. Stephen's school, Berwick, was blessed. Fifty pupils were enrolled, and the missionary work of Sister Mary of St. Cyprian[2] was inaugurated. For years this Sister, who later distinguished herself by obtaining, at the age of 71 years, a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Loyola University, devoted herself to the children and the people of Berwick. So great was her sympathetic understanding of these people, that Sister seemed to identify herself with them in all their undertakings.

Sister Mary of St. Cyprian was not the only Marianite to distinguish herself on this mission. Sister Mary of St. Seraphia, who during the years 1907-1910, 1914-1918 guided the destiny of the convent schools at Morgan City and Berwick, merits much credit. The other Superiors acquitted themselves equally well of their tasks:

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[1] "Old World Louisiana," **Travel** Magazine, January, 1947; condensed in Catholoic **Digest**, June, 1947; p. 86.

[2] Sister Mary of St. Cyprian and her co-workers in those pioneer days rowed across Berwick Bay in a skiff in order to instruct the children of Berwick.

Sister Mary of St. Veronica	1897-1898
Mother Mary of St. James	1898-1902
Sister Mary of St. Justin	1902-1904
Sister Mary of St. Juliana	1904-1905
Sister Mary of St. Praxeda	1905-1907
Sister Mary of St. Seraphia	1907-1910
Sister Mary of St. Albina	1910-1912
Sister Mary of St. Frederic	1912-1914
Sister Mary of St. Seraphia	1914-1918
Sister Mary of St. Justin	1918-1921
Sister Mary of St. Casimir	1921-1924
Sister Mary of St. Frederic	1924-1925
Sister Mary of St. Dennis	1926-1932
Sister Mary of St. Rosalie	1932-1933
Sister Mary of St. Julius	1934-1935
Sister Mary of St. Albert	1935-1941
Sister Mary of St. Casimir	1941-1943
Sister Mary of St. Aidan	1943-1947

A loving tribute by Father Andrew Souby to one of these Superiors, Mother Mary of St. James, on the occasion of her Silver Jubilee of profession, follows:

Full oft thy heart has pleaded
With that of the Crucified,
For many graces needed,
Full oft in form prostrated
At the shrine of the Unseen God
Thy soul has contemplated
His mercies deep and broad.

To plead, to soar, or to suffer
Was ever thy daily task;
These three have served as buffer
Lest the flesh for respite ask.

Years slip like sands in silence
For the humble Marianite,
The while they sought her guidance
She gave of the "Widow's Mite."

'Twas small, but blest the offices
Allotted to her share;
As Teacher, Mistress of Novices,
Superior, true to her care.

'Twas sweet that name of "Sister"
She bore these many years;
Of late, her equals missed her;.
The void caused silent tears.

'Twas whispered 'round, God willed it,
That hers should lead their names;
Their prudent choice revealed it,
And now she's "Mother James."

A mother—yes! Maturity
Completes that borrowed name.
To be loved and love in purity
Is way 'bove kinship's claim.

Let years then flow like a river;
Let youth's fresh bloom turn grey;
How soft the tint of silver
That clings to Life's long day!

Oh! silver threads of Wisdom,
Be her talisman and plea
To chant in Jesus' Kingdom
Her eternal Jubilee!

And, Lord, grant this last honor
When Mother's growing old ,
Thy loving glance rest on her,
Make silver shine as gold.

Though it has been said that the outstanding characteristics of Morgan City people seem to be those of recognizing need, supplying it, and then looking around for the next achievement, the impression should not be gathered that everything in Morgan City is done automatically. Many human interest stories lie hidden deep in the recesses of loving hearts, and are told and retold only to those who share in the love for the old convent and the love of the people for the Sisters and the Priests.

Reverend Thomas Smith was an exile from Erin, a staunch old man that could roll the Gaelic in soft wheedling tones or thunder aloud its sonorous reprimands. Gentle and kind, unless duty made demands on him for firmness, Father won the hearts of his parishioners. He loved them all; yet very human was his attachment to the Dalton family, whose mother was from Father's native **Tralee.** Wednesday was "Irish Day" at the Daltons. His Reverence, duty permitting, was sure to be there. Father wore the traditional derby, and carried a handy black thorn. This black thorn cane possessed marvelous powers, so that it charmed snakes. It was to Father's good friends that he bequeathed his walking cane; it was to his friends, the Marianites, that he gave his much-loved niece, Margaret Smith, who later became Sister Mary of St. Marcelline when she consecrated her life to God.

A story, which is often told, reveals the personal love the Priest had for each of his parishioners and with which he inspired them. One stormy night Father was aroused by terrific knocking at the rectory door. On its threshold stood an avowed atheist. This man came to tell Father Smith that he was wanted on a sick call; a man was dying of yellow fever in Berwick. Ever zealous, Father was yet dismayed. What could he do on such a night of stygian darkness? "What shall I do?" asked the poor priest, never dreaming that an answer would or could be given to his question. The good atheist, if such there can be, replied, "I'll take you." "Take me," replied the priest, "That's an impossibility; neither man nor beast could attempt to get to the ferry this night." The Priest's words were emphasized by flashes of lightning and torrents of rain; it seemed as if the very elements dared him. "Well, if that man needs you, and you want to go, I am still willing to take you." And to the poor Priest's surprise, this artist-atheist, sensitive to the least annoyance, somewhat humorously proposed a ride on his back to the old Priest. Thus Father was brought to the ferry by one whom we hope Saint Christopher gave a safe journey across the sea of life as a recompense for his good deed that night. No ferry dared cross turbulent Berwick Bay, so in a skiff, oared by a colored man, Father in company with his atheistic friend, crossed the Bay. The sick man, shortly after being anointed by Father Smith, died, gratefully thanking God for His mercies of that night, the least of which was not that the aged Pastor had a friend who knew how and when "to stand by."

Many stories are told that reveal the kind love that united the Pastor, the Sisters, and the people. From those related often, the noble self-sacrifice of another Pastor, Reverend Andrew Souby shines through. Father Souby was a most mortified man and a deeply pious one. When called at night for sick calls, he was often found on his knees taking his day's refreshment in prayer. When he left on his last journey, though his heart was sad, he was reconciled; but he recommended his special friend, old Uncle George Peterson to the care of his devoted housekeeper, Miss Mamie Dalton, daughter of Mrs. John Dalton. "Take care of George. See that he has a pension," Father repeated time and time again. Uncle George was seven at the time Lincoln freed the Negroes. Miss Mamie fulfilled Father's wishes to the letter.

The cordial and human love that unites the Sisters to the people of Morgan City is reflected in the attitude of St. Margaret's Daughters. A Morgan City newspaper commends their charity:

> Knowing that the Sisters have always in their schools a number of poor children of worthy parentage, these ladies claim it their privilege to be allowed to defray from their treasury the expenses of books, stationery, and other necessities of such pupils, and a check is sent regularly every month to the school for that purpose.

The Ladies of Morgan City have apparently pledged themselves to pleasant surprises. They make use of every favorable occasion to execute their happy plots. They mask their purpose at one time under the guise of a masquerade ball, at which jollity combines with benevolence. At another time, their scheme is hidden away by a Bunny in an Easter egg. Once a sample of this bunny fruit was sent to Sister Mary of St. Justin at the Sacred Heart Convent, and upon examination, Sister and her delighted corps of Sister-inspectors, found it contained a most surprising center, composed of silver layers lined by green. The fair messengers who brought the Easter egg unraveled the mystery.

School life in Morgan City expanded. From a faculty of five Sisters in 1893 to a faculty of seventeen in 1947; from an enrollment of not quite fifty in 1893 to an enrollment of six hundred forty in 1947. Sodalities and extra-curricular activities from time to time have been organized; in 1905, the Children of Mary; later, the Holy Angels Sodality; in 1922, the Junior Holy Name; in 1925, the Infant Jesus; in 1926, the St. Aloysius‘ Boys. With expansion came improvements. In 1933 came steam heat through the generosity of the Knights of Columbus; also, in 1933 came added improvements in the convent and the schools. In 1937 a Kindergarten was opened under the direction of the Sisters at the Dalton Memorial, a parish hall donated by Miss Mamie Dalton in memory of her father.

A date not to be forgotten is November 10, 1931. It marks the visit of the State High-School Supervisor, Mr. C. T. Trudeau, to Sacred Heart School. Mr. Trudeau found everything in accord with State requirements. A few days later, November 17, a letter from Mr. T. H. Harris, State Superintendent, proved this: "He was proud to place the Sacred Heart Academy on the list of approved High Schools."

1938 was an eventful year for the Sacred Heart Academy. The enrollment passed the four hundred mark. Though joyful and enthused over the school's prosperity, all were soon plunged in deepest grief. Their loved Pastor, Reverend Andrew Souby, died October fourteenth of this year. This year also marks the acquisition of Father's Souby's very valuable library, a treasured collection of years made by Father who was considered an author and a connoisseur in literature.

During the month of February, 1939, the Sisters and students welcomed the new Pastor, the Reverend Jules S. Toups. Father Toups undertook the direct supervision of the Academy of the Sacred Heart. Just one year later, 1940, a new school activity was inaugurated. The Sacred Heart Academy Band was organized by Sister Mary of St. Albert Hayes, and it is to the credit of its members that on every civic and religious occasion this band is much in demand.

The lovely Sacred Heart Shrine on the campus, a tribute to the Sacred Heart Boys in service during World War II, was erected in 1943. Sister Mary of St. Aidan, Superior of the Academy, undertook this noble project, as she had been both teacher and Principal of the Academy all during the years of the boys' growth from childhood to manhood.

The year 1945 marks the equipping of the Dalton Memorial as a temporary High School, as the Academy could no longer adequately house the students enrolled.

Despite the splendid co-operation of Priests, Sisters and people of Morgan City to make life at Sacred Heart Academy pleasant and comfortable, the cross from time to time casts its shadow across the threshold of the convent door. Such an occasion was that of May 12, 1947 when Sister Mary of St. Albert, Hayes, a former Superior of the Academy, died. No more appropriate tribute could be paid Sister Mary of St. Albert than that contained in the Circular Letter of the First Assistant General of the Marianites in Précigné, Sister Mary of St. Cajetan:

> By the death of this regretted companion, the Louisiana Province lost an excellent religious and a devoted teacher. May our Heavenly Mother soon obtain for her the recompense promised to those who consecrate their lives teaching others to know and love her Divine Son. Let us ask her, also, to fill the vacancy which her death has caused in our ranks, for work abounds but the laborers, alas, are too few."

Sister Mary of St. Albert Hayes served in the capacity of Superior in the houses of Holy Name of Mary, Algiers; Sts. Peter and Paul, New Orleans; Sacred Heart, Morgan City. She was well known and loved by those she taught, and came in contact with all these and other missions to which she was assigned, among them St. Charles Academy, Lake Charles; St. Basil Academy, Plaquemine, La.; Sacred Heart Convent, Ville Platte, and St. Joseph's School in Arnaudville. During the years 1932-34 Sister filled the responsible office of Mistress of Novices. May she rest in peace!

Sacred Heart Academy today stands as one of the most efficiently managed schools in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. The faculty of three Priests, eleven Sisters and three laywomen can well lay claim to the fact that scholastic and professional education brings dividends. A glance at the Sacred Heart Alumni roster brings joy to the Sacred Heart faculty. Not in vain have they labored; Sacred Heart Alumni names are found in honor among the Clergy, the Religious, and the civil leaders.

SACRED HEART'S SERVICE BANNER FOR CHRIST

Those from the Alumnae who have entered the Marianites of Holy Cross community were:

Sr. M. of St. Marcelline	Marguerite Smith,
Sr. M. of St. Dorothy	Thelma Miremont,
Sr. M. of St. Mark	Marie Edna Michel,
Sr. M. of St. Joseph	Edna Gillen,
Sr. M. of St. Madeleine	Wilhelmina Hebert,
Sr. M. of St. Andrew	Leona Songe,
Sr. M. of St. Richard	Mary Ann Giroir,

The priestly vocations were: Reverend H. R. Jolley, S.J. and Reverend Anthony Rousso. One member of the alumni entered the Maryknoll Order, and became Brother Edward Alfred, M.M.

Enormous reefs of shell located beyond the land arch that encircles the northern shore of Atchafalaya Bay have been converted into building material, railroad ballast, road-surfacing material, poultry feed, fertilizer, and many other products. Morgan City and Berwick are the two greatest shell-producing areas in the United States.

Some of the Old World customs linger here, and cast about Morgan City a magic spell. Last August 26, Reverend Jules S. Toups, Pastor of Sacred Heart Church, assisted by Reverend Bernard Mistretta, blessed the trawlers of the City's shrimp fleet before it left on another fishing trip. Of all the interesting phases of Louisiana's great sea-food industry, the most colorful are the annual ceremonies of the "blessing of the shrimp fleets." As Father Toups read the ritual, both priests sprinkled holy water on the 233 trawlers which lined the pier. This age-old rite originated on the coast of Brittany[3] where Catholic French fishermen had their fleets blessed, and prayed for protection from storms and other misfortunes. French priests brought the custom to North America.

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[3] **Do You Know Louisiana?**, published by Tourist Division, State Department of Commerce and Industry, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, p. 283.

THE ROAD TO THE CHAPEL
Provincial House

PART SIX

THE LUMINOUS RAYS OF HOLY CROSS

"And by Thee be duly ended . . . ."

CHAPTER TWENTY

HORIZONS FROM HISTORIC HEIGHTS

THE CROSS from the spire of the chapel's winding tower casts a protecting shadow upon the old residence of the Sisters at the New Orleans Provincial House as if to indicate the very standard of the Marianites: **In the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ!** under which the Sisters still go forth from this old home to prepare young people for life, to open their souls to the sublimity of faith. This has been the task of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross since the call from Most Reverend Antoine Blanc and Most Reverend Jean Marie Odin brought them into the teaching field in New Orleans.

The necessity for Parochial schools is many times more urgent now than it was a hundred years ago. In order to staff their schools, the Marianites have been literally "doubling" themselves, Superior General of the Marianites, on her visit to the Academy of Reverend Henry C. Bezou told Reverend Mother Mary of St. Odile, the Holy Angels November 26, 1946.

Like others, the Marianites of Holy Cross relied upon their own resources and patronage in establishing and maintaining their schools. In all their academies they taught the primary classes as well as the academic courses. In many instances they established and maintained Parochial schools at their own expense, some of which the Community still maintains—namely, at Plaquemine, Opelousas, Franklin, Lake Charles, and Morgan City. At Houma this was the procedure until the centennial year (1947-1948), the community property passing into the hands of the St. Francis De Sales Congregation when the Act of Sale was negotiated September 25, 1947. Fully aware of the great need the Church in Houma has for this property, and of the mind of the Church that the convent and school should form part of the parish unit and be the possession of the Congregation, the Marianites desired to cooperate wholeheartedly with them in this great work of Catholic education, and decided to accept the nominal sum of $40,000 in view of the fact that a convent would be built as part of the unit to be used by the Community. The Marianites will continue to serve the cause of educating Catholic youth to which they dedicate all their energies.

The upbuilding of the Parochial school system in the United States has been a gigantic task, entailing sacrifices innumerable, especially on the part of religious teachers. A task of such proportions could only be accomplished by women of consecrated lives, willing to labor for a bare subsistence, looking to God for a reward hereafter. Only heaven's record can show the ceaseless activity and tireless industry of religious teachers; aided by God's grace, they have been expended in the building up of the parochial school system. Nobly and generously have Catholics responded to the demands made upon their means, but the sacrifices demanded of teachers were far greater. To maintain and extend the system exacts sacrifices as great as ever. Material requisites are better supplied in the Twentieth century than they were in the Nineteenth. New schools are in preparation in everyone of the Marianite country establishments in Louisiana, but the teacher's task has not diminished, and the future invites to fields, near and afar. Children need consecrated teachers to guide them to the light of truth and to the way of right living. "The harvest is great, indeed, but the laborers are few."[1]

For this work Marianites came into Louisiana a century ago. In this work they have lived and labored, never faltering, through every phase alert and progressive, apace with every advance, aiming ever at the Christian ideal of education, which means preparing the child for life in the world to come as well as for life in this world. The Marianites were in the field of Parochial education when Archbishop Hughes pleaded so eloquently: "Let Parochial schools be established and maintained everywhere; the days have come, and the place, in which the school is more necessary than the church," a truism which Father Bernard in Arnaudville put into practice by building his new school of the Little Flower before his new church, thoroughly believing that the Catholic school is the "feeder for the Church."

Careful preparation is a prerequisite for any profession; it is doubly important for the Marianites for whom teaching is a life-work, looking forward to no other rank or higher station in this world than the service which claims heaven for a reward. To prepare their Sisters for this noble work, the Superiors form them to habits of solid study and close application to duty. The foundation for this course is solidly laid in the thorough religious training given in the Novitiate. Besides the Novitiate in New Orleans, Louisiana, the Congregation of the Marianites has two others, one located at the Mother House, Précigné, Sarthe, France, and a second one at the recently-acquired property at Princeton, New Jersey. "High-land", Cedar Grove Road, Princeton, New Jersey, formerly the property of Thomas S. Dignan, has ceded its title to "Our Lady of Princeton," which will serve a twofold purpose—the first and most essential one is the establishment of a Novitiate to serve the Northern Province. All through the war years, the New Orleans Novitiate trained those members of the Community entering from New York and destined to serve the Community in the Northern Province. Formerly, candidates for that Province were trained in the Motherhouse at Precigne, France. Apart from the Novitiate there will be reserved a limited number of rooms for guests who seek spiritual or physical relaxation in the restful atmosphere of "Our Lady of Princeton." On Sunday, August 10, 1947, at 3:30 p.m. Most Reverend William A. Griffin, D.D., Bishop of Trenton, blessed the new Novitiate. Two Sisters from the Louisiana Province attended the blessing, Sister Mary of St. Dorothy (Miremont) and Sister Mary of St. Finnbar (McNamara). Reverend Mother Mary of St. Odile came from France for the opening of this Novitiate.

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[1] St. Luke 10:2.

The Louisiana Province, through the beneficence of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest B. Norman, received a tract of land upon which it hopes to erect a modern Novitiate building. Attended by their son-in-law, Mr. G. Henry Pierson, L.L.D., in the company of Mr. Ernest Robin, L.L.D., legal counsel for the Marianites, Mr. and Mrs. Ernest B. Norman executed this Act of Gift (in the form of an Act of Sale) in the parlor of the Academy of the Holy Angels, 3500 St. Claude Avenue, July 17, 1947, by means of which the donors gave to the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross this 40-Acre tract of land for educational and religious purposes. Situated in the restricted subdivision, **Aurora Gardens**, which the Norman family is developing in the Parish of Orleans, on Newton Highway, within ten minutes' drive from the Canal Street ferry, this site will be used by the Marianites for the erection of a new school building also, in addition to that of the Novitiate.

The farseeing eye of Reverend Leo Marx, S.M., Pastor of St. Joseph Chapel, Lower Coast, caught sight of this wooded tract of land, and realizing the broadening growth of this Suburban section of Algiers became instrumental in procuring the Normans' gift to the Marianites for an educational and religious center, so requisite to every thriving community.

This gift of land is not only a beautiful monument to the beneficence of the Norman family but will also prove a useful factor in the life of the citizens of **Aurora Gardens** for years to come. It will likewise prove of interest to the Archdiocese of New Orleans as the parish will grow hand in hand with the growth of this subdivision.

Expressing grateful acceptance, Mother Mary Xavier said the gift would stand forever on the Marianite records as a fitting monument to the beneficience of Mr. and Mrs. Norman and their heirs who would be prayerfully and gratefully remembered by the Community. Mother also mentioned that "generations of Sisters and of the children who would be educated there, would rise up to bless the Normal family for this benefaction."

This gift of Mr. Ernest B. Norman's family infused into the Sisters new energy and inspiration for the work of upbuilding a new religious and educational unit at **Aurora Gardens.**

The Community opens its novitiate to young women whose previous intellectual attainments have awakened aspirations to consecrate their lives to the sacred cause of promoting Christian education. The two years they spend there is of supreme value in preparing them for their sublime calling of teaching. The drill in the principles of religious life, with self-improvement as the aim ever in view, prepares them to concentrate all their energies and intellectual faculties upon attaining the Christian ideal of education in their work as teachers. From the Novitiate, the young Sisters pass to the College Department of Holy Angels Academy where the course is directed to the acquisition of accurate knowledge and familiarity with the best methods of imparting knowledge. Others attend the various colleges referred to in the earlier part of this narrative, until they receive their Bachelor of Arts degree which entitles them to teach in the schools of Louisiana. Thus prepared, the Sisters enter upon their duties in the class room.

Demands are constantly being made upon the Congregation to supply teaching personnel for established houses or for new foundations. This is a problem that always confronts the religious Superior, and it was one with which Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty) coped admirably all through her Provincialship. The problem of augmenting the ranks was successfully met by Mother for nearly half of the members of the community in this centennial year date their entrance from the time Mother assumed the reins of government.

Like so many other teaching Congregations, the Marianites have been unable to meet all demands upon them for teachers. In view of the necessity for maintaining and extending the Parochial school system and the insufficient number of teachers to supply the ever-growing demand, it is plainly an important matter, demanding especially the attention of parents and pastors to encourage vocations to religious teaching communities. With their accustomed zeal, however, the Marianites have in recent years opened four Parochial schools. Some of these schools, beginning with 190 pu-

Signing A Centennial Agreement

pils, have since doubled and trebled the attendance. To mention each one would be a monotonous repetition of similar experiences; for the difficulties attending the founding and maintaining of schools vary more in degree than in character, whether they result from the conditions the Sisters found at Sacred Heart High School, Ville Platte, and at St. Mary of the Angels School, New Orleans, in which schools the Marianites taught through their first year with the Community of Sisters who were giving up the school (The personnel was drawn partly from both Communities until the Marianites could supply the entire personnel); or in the recently opened Little Flower School in Arnaudville, or at St. Joseph's, Lower Coast. To the Sisters, however, such experiences never become monotonous. Whatever concerns the success of their work and the welfare of the children in the school is of sufficient interest to them, each kindly face that welcomes them to a new school is remembered, each kindly act of encouragement awakens their gratitude, and they devoutly invoke God's blessing upon those who make sacrifices to establish and to maintain the school, the parents who overcome difficulties and bear hardships to keep the children in school, and especially upon the priests who labor in maintaining the school with the same spirit of self-sacrifice.

With the process of their Parochial schools, the Marianites have kept apace in their Academies. Two causes combine to their growth, the excellence and thoroughness of the courses given and the desire of pupils who have known the Sisters in the primary grades to continue with their favorite teachers. To meet this demand, the Marianites established Academies alongside of their Primary Parochial schools.

The Marianites have always been assisted and encouraged by true friends and generous benefactors wherever they have established or conducted schools. Towards these benefactors they have ever cherished a deep sense of gratitude that prompted many fervent prayers. This sense of gratitude springs instinctively from their devoted hearts, and they cherish it as a sacred duty because Very Reverend Father Moreau, their founder, enjoined it upon them as an obligation when he inserted in their evening prayers the one of gratitude: "Grant, O Lord, life everlasting to all those who do us good for Thy Name's sake."[1] Thus, the Congregation feels it has a particular obligation to pray for its benefactors, all those persons that in any way have assisted the Community in spiritual or temporal necessities by prayers, advice, works, or goods or property of any description; of course, our Holy Father, the Pope, our Bishops and confessors, have special claim to pious remembrances. It is only just that their names should be inscribed on the records of the Community for everlasting remembrance.

This list might well grow to a volume. It would be impossible to recount the notable favors from particular benefactors for whom the Marianites cherish special remembrance. Each mission house has its own special list. The Marianites hold each in grateful memory and love to recall every token of kindness and friendly interest, but for some their hearts throb quicker; at the names of the Community's illustrious Cardinal Protector Lepicier and Cardinal Vincenzo La Puma, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, recently deceased; for successive Apostolic Delegates at Washington, especially His Eminence, Diomede Cardinal Falconio and the present Most Reverend Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, who gave indispensable and invaluable assistance throughout World War II, especially during the period when the Indult for Mother Provincial had to be procured to enable her to continue in office during the war. Reverend G. M. Sauvage, C.S.C., Procurator General of the Congregation of Holy Cross at Home is especially and gratefully remembered in this instance, as it was he who assisted Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien in procuring this indult.

Those who have succeeded the venerable and fatherly Most Reverend Antoine Blanc, (1836-1850), in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, in the order named, under whose eccelesiastical supervision and guidance the Marianites have prospered: Most Reverend Jean Marie Odin, C.M. (1861-1870); Most Reverend Napoleon J. Perche, (1870-1883); Most Reverend Francis Xavier Leray, (1883-1887); Most Reverend Francis Janssens (1888-1897); Most Reverend P. L. Chapelle (1897-1905); Most Reverend James B. Blenk, S.M. (1905-1917); Most Reverend John W. Shaw, (1918-1934); Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D. (1935-) have been true and devoted friends as well as eccelesiastical superiors to the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, who will ever treasure their names in the book of memories. The present Archbishop continues the kind interest of his worthy predecessors, whose fatherly protection has ever been a shield and a guide to the Marianites. His constant kindness and encouragement have ever been gratefully appreciated.

For all who have proven themselves by their benefactions the Sisters pay the tribute of their gratitude by invoking every day the blessing of eternal life upon them. For the Reverend Patrick F. Sheil, C.S.C., the Community's Superior during the trying days of Civil War when the building of the present Academy of the Holy Angels was undertaken, the Sisters hold the deepest gratitude. Without his guidance, who can say whether the task of erecting the Academy could have been realized during the years 1862-

1865? The progress made under Father Shiel's direction proves the impetus given the work of the Marianites by this Father of Holy Cross.

In rejoicing at this Centenary, the Marianites are mindful of the recognition due the Fathers and Brothers of Holy Cross for the sacrifices and trials they shared with them in the early years. All through the hundred years in Louisiana the Brothers of Holy Cross, whose centenary in Louisiana also occurs in 1948, have ever proven themselves brotherly to the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, assisting Holy Angels' faculty by providing the Holy Cross College Band for occasions, for May processions, May festivals, and graduations. The Marianites express their gratitude for the devoted help of the Brothers and Fathers of Holy Cross.

Among the Fathers of Holy Cross who have contributed to the Marianites' spiritual welfare, the first and deepest gratitude is extended to Very Reverend Father Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., the Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross. On February 24, 1941 the Sisters were impressed with his deeply religious spirit as he addressed them concerning the cause for beautification of Very Reverend Basil Moreau and Reverend Brother Andre, C.S.C. Father Cousineau was present at Brother Andre's deathbed, and was able to give very graphic details of this saintly Brother's death.

On March 31, 1942, to honor the visit of Very Reverend Father Cousineau, Holy Angels' students presented the drama, **Because by Thy Holy Cross.** Ten priests were present for the play, at the close of which Father Cousineau spoke beautifully of the work of the Marianite Sisters. Father thanked Mother Provincial for her invitation which afforded him the happiness of witnessing the very impressive drama, saying that the presentation of a drama of that nature was most appropriate at the beginning of the Congregation's second Centennial, and the title, a fitting one for Holy Cross. Afterwards, Father Cousineau admitted to the Sisters that the play affected him as much, if not more than, the Passion Play of **Oberammergau,** which he had witnessed about twenty years previous to this date.

This distinguished visitor to the Provincial House arrived near the close of the Sister's second retreat, August 23, 1947. One of the retreat conferences was waived in order to provide time for a conference from the Superior General of Holy Cross, upon whom the Marianites look as a most worthy successor to their venerated Father Moreau. Father Cousineau related the developments in the cause of the Founder's beautification, stating that one of the Fathers was going to Rome in September, 1947 to convey documents bearing upon the saintly life of Father Moreau and the favors that had been received through his intercession.

To all the Reverend Jesuit Fathers who acted as Chaplains in the Community's past history, likewise the Franciscan Chaplains of the past twenty years, and to the numerous other priests whose self-denial and sacrifices have insured success in Parochial schools where otherwise the Sisters would not have been able to cope with the difficulties, gratitude is due at this Centenary date. Here the names that present themselves are those of all the Marist Fathers who have acted as Pastors of the Parish of Holy Name of Mary, Algiers, Louisiana, beginning with the Marianites' friend and counsellor, Very Reverend Thomas J. Larkin, S.M. Father Larkin gave the impulse of his own zeal and devotion to the parish, and won alike the hearts of his people and the Sisters who readily recognized in him a highly-esteemed counsellor and friend. To the Sisters he gave the benefit of his wisdom and mature judgment in matters of school management. By his prudent care, untiring efforts and wise counsel, he rendered inestimable service to them. Through the years, other Marists have encouraged and sustained the Marianites in many a trying hour. Not wishing to see them suffer any embarrassment when a shortage of teachers prevails, these Marist Fathers willingly accept secular teachers to fill the gap until the Community is able to supply the necessary personnel. As Rector of the Notre Dame Seminary, Reverend Michael J. Larkin, S.M., a nephew to Reverend Thomas J. Larkin, S.M., continued assisting the Marianites by supplying Marists for the Sisters' conferences and for important occasions in the life of the Marianites. Reverend Robert J. Stahl, S.M., continues the traditional Marist contribution by devoting his energies and his talent directing the Sisters' and the Students' choirs as the occasion demands. The Reverend Robert Stahl, S.M., composed the musical score for the centennial Mass in April, 1948. He has in the past dedicated some of his sacred musical compositions to Mother Provincial. Reverend Father Daniel O'Meara, S.M., Rector of the Notre Dame Seminary, and Reverend Joseph Buckley, S.M., are gratefully remembered by the Sisters for their inspiring spiritual conferences.

Other talented friends of the Community have used their talents to further the interests of the Marianites. Reverend James A. Greeley, S.J.,[2] wrote the pageant, **A Canticle of Love**, which he and Mother Mary Xavier directed and presented in the spring of 1936. The Dean of the Loyola School of Music, Doctor Ernest Schuyten, composed the musical score and directed the orchestra and chorus throughout this pageant. Doctor Schuyten performed a similar act of devotedness by composing the musical score for the Centennial pageant, **A Canticle of Praise.** He directed the orchestra and the chorus when the pageant was staged during the celebration April 13, 1948, at the Municipal Auditorium. Father Robert Stahl, S.M., conducted the choir of Sisters. From 1941 to the present date Mr. Charles Edward Dillon has been the efficient Stage Manager for all pageants presented at the Municipal Auditorium. When Mother Mary Xavier began to present pageants in the spring of 1928, Miss Carmel Discon wrote and directed the first one in collaboration with Mother, for which she has earned a grateful remembrance in the Marianites' Centenary.

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[2] Formerly Dean of Loyola University of the South, New Orleans.

A third achievement for Holy Cross arises above the Centennial horizon; that is, the reunion of all the Family of Holy Cross. At the invitation of Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien, Superior General, representatives of the branches of the Holy Cross communities met at Le Mans, Motherhouse of the French community, to plan further steps toward the canonization of the Founder of Holy Cross, Very Reverend Basil Moreau. Reverend Mother's account of what transpired at Le Mans on that memorable event follows:

> The party arrived at Le Mans June 28, at midnight. The next day they were at the Motherhouse at 1:30. As at Christmas or Easter, festal bells pealed forth announcing tidings of great rejoicing. The Community assembled in the chapel while the choir sang the **Magnificat,** after which words of hearty welcome were exchanged. After dinner, the members of the council had their recreation apart from the rest of the community, repairing to the parlor for this purpose. Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, Superior General of the Fathers of Holy Cross, explained the purpose of the meeting. Mother Mary Rose Elizabeth, C.S.C., Superior General of the Sisters of Holy Cross, Holy Cross, Indiana, said that they had come in "as new-born babes ignorant of their connections with the Motherhouse and Father Moreau, and that until recently their impressions were that Reverend Edward Sorin, C.S.C., the founder of Notre Dame University, was their real founder."
>
> Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien, proceeded to express her motive in inviting the Superiors of the three Holy Cross communities; namely, to draw up a petition requesting the introduction of the venerated Founder's cause. Having been drafted, this petition was then signed by the four attending Superiors General; Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross; Mother M. Rose Elizabeth, Mother Mary of St. Julien, Mother Mary of St. Maximilienne,

> Superiors General of the American, French, and Canadian communities of the Sisters of Holy Cross. In this document they petitioned His Excellency, Monsignor Grente, Archbishop of Le Mons, to inaugurate the diocesan cause of the canonization of Father Moreau.
>
> On the thirteenth of July we met again at Our Lady of Holy Cross, the first church built by our venerated Founder. The Bishop celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, a beautiful eulogy was given, and after Mass Very Reverend Father Cousineau and Bishop Grente spoke. Then the Bishop, of his own accord, asked to go down to the crypt to pray at our Founder's tomb. It was most impressive. We returned to the Clinic, had a banquet, after which Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament was given.
>
> These are days of heaven; they make us forget the horrors, the griefs and the sufferings of the dreadful war just ended. The next day the Mothers separated. The Indiana Mothers went to Lourdes, accompanied by the two Louisiana Sisters. Then they went to Paris to arrange for their return to the States. Last night they came back to Le Mans. Mother Mary of St. Maximilienne went to Lourdes a few days later than the others. My only regret, dear Mother, is that you could not come, but I know you were with us in spirit and in prayer.
>
> As soon as I can I will send you the resolution drafted at the meeting, the gist of which is: First, Close union of prayer. Wednesday of each week to be observed as **Holy Cross Day** with all Community prayers offered for vocations and for the respective works of all three branches; second, July 13 to be observed each year as a day of Thanksgiving; third, the placing in our houses of a bust of Father Founder with a plaque testifying to future generations the commemoration of the great day when the three branches of Holy Cross Sisters united in prayer and affects as a first step towards a future union.

The three Sisters from the Louisiana Province sent as delegates to this conference at Le Mans were Sister Mary of St. Cajetan Doriocourt, Assistant Provincial; Sister Mary of St. Adrian Collins, Superior, Immaculate Conception Convent, Opelousas, Louisiana; and Sister Mary of St. Theresa McDonald, of Holy Angels Academy.

Mother Mary Rose Elizabeth, recorded personal impressions received on this visit to the birthplace of Holy Cross:

> All that is necessary to be convinced of the holiness of our founder is to visit the places sacred to his memory where he exercised his untiring zeal in bringing souls to God. While his

Meeting At Le Mans

> personal life was one of complete abnegation, the buildings that he erected and furnished bear the unmistakable impression of the beauty and the nobility of his soul, of the refinement of religious culture. I have no doubt that Father Moreau is a great saint, and I am sure that the meeting in France will be fruitful of great things in advancing the cause of our Father Founder.[3]

Reverend Father Cousineau made known at this meeting the possession of affidavits from physicians attesting the miraculous cure of a little girl in a hospital conducted by the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross at Lake Megantic, Canada, but Monsignor Grente explained that an even more important indication of Father Moreau's sanctity is the fact that from the humble beginnings a little over a hundred years ago his work has endured and grown.

Today there are approximately 400 Fathers and 400 Brothers of Holy Cross in the United States, Canada, France, India, Brazil, Chile, and Haiti. There are three autonomous congregations of Sisters: 1500 governed from the Motherhouse at Holy Cross, Indiana; 500 from the Motherhouse in France, (Précigné, France), and 2,000 from the Motherhouse in Canada, (Saint Laurent, Montreal, Canada.) The American and Canadian groups have foreign missions in India. The Holy Cross Fathers conduct the University of Notre Dame, the University of Portland, Oregon, and Saint Edward's University, Austin, Texas. The American Sisters conduct Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, at Holy Cross, Indiana, the College of Saint Mary-of-the-Wasatch at Salt Lake City, and Dunbarton College of Holy Cross at Washington, and, in addition, eight hospitals and approximately a hundred secondary and preparatory schools throughout the country. What was done at Le Mans, France, June 29, and July 13, 1946, will have profound implications for the Church in America where these Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters of Holy Cross are so widely established.

At this family meeting of the three branches of Holy Cross in Le Mans July 13, 1946, Reverend Mother Mary Rose Elizabeth, of the Indiana community extended an invitation to Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien, Superior General of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, to unite with them in their mission work in India. Two Sisters were sent from the Mother House at Précigné. From the Louisiana Province Sister Mary of St. Leo Cavell was chosen for this mission. The long-cherished hope of consecrating her life to the foreign mission work was realized when she left the Louisiana Province December 10, 1946. Sister Mary of St. Leo went to Saint Mary's Convent, Holy Cross, Indiana, one week-end for the Indiana Departure Ceremonies given to the Sisters embracing missionary work.

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[3] Statement given to the South Bend press shortly after Mother M. Rose Elizabeth's return to the United States from the meeting in France.

Wishing to pay tribute to Sister Mary of St. Leo's missionary efforts in the past and the sacrifice she was making of her own life to the missions, Reverend Hermann Lohmann, Archdiocesan Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and the Catholic Students' Mission Crusade, together with the Crusaders presented to Sister Mary of St. Leo a check for $600.00, the surplus of their fund, to defray her traveling expenses to India.

On the evening of December 10, 1946, the date of her departure from New Orleans, the members of the Crusade, officers in full regalia, entered the Chapel of Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, at Holy Angels Academy, together with many of the Academy students, Sister M. Leo's mother and members of the Cavell family, friends and a great number of priests, for the ceremony of departure, which was very impressive. The **Ave Maria** was sung. Reverend Hermann Lohmann, Archdiocesan Director of the Catholic Students Mission Crusade, addressed the new missionary whom Christ was sending to join the millions He had sent out during the past centuries:

> Jesus is sending out another one of His well-trained disciples today, one who has been daily conversing with Him in meditation, talking over with Him the problems that she has to deal with. This is indeed, a day of much rejoicing, a day on which each one of us can look forward to greater success than even the disciples experienced—even the devils will be subject to this new mission in the Name of Jesus—the devils of ignorance of malice, of heathenism will be crushed through the new missionary He sends out today. It is truly a day of congratulations to this mission-minded community, which came here about one hundred years ago and planted the little seed that is growing and flourishing these many years until it is now able to send out foreign missionaries. This little seed is blossoming. Jesus is picking His first blossoms to do His work, and I am sure to do it well.
>
> To this mission-minded community so fervent and interested in the missions, united to them by prayer and sacrifice, we offer congratulations today upon giving one of its very best equipped members to go out to the foreign missions. To the family of Sister Mary of St. Leo, the Cavells, we offer congratulations upon their cheerfully giving up one of their own. God gave; God is now taking away. "Blessed be the hand of the Lord!" I am sure this is their prayer.
>
> It is Sister Mary of St. Leo's unique privilege to be the first

> of her community to go out to do actual work in the missions,[4] which we at home have been trying to help others to do. Let us remember that our work is just beginning, and that today we must take the special responsibility of praying that God will give Sister Mary of St. Leo every needed grace; that He will strengthen her in every moment of weakness and comfort her in every trial and sorrow that may come to her in the foreign mission work.
>
> I am sure as Sister Mary of St. Leo goes out to active missionary work, if in our humble way we join our weak prayers together, God will bless them and answer them. Let us pray that she will be empowered to teach, for "This is eternal life, that Thy Name, the one true God, Whom today they do not know, they may come to know, Jesus Christ Whom God has sent to redeem and to save us, Jesus Christ, in Whose Name Sister Mary of St. Leo Cavell goes out. God bless you, Sister Mary of St. Leo. May you remember, as you go out today, to do the work of God, **your name is written in Heaven.**[5]

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was given; the prayers of the itinerary were recited by the Sisters in common. A death-like silence and stillness reigned in the chapel as Sister Mary of St. Leo knelt beside dear Mother Provincial, who, with voice at first a little unsteady with emotion, but which became wonderfully strong later, read to Sister Mary of St. Leo the mandate to go to the missions. Those words still echo in our minds and hearts. The **Benedictus was sung.** The most impressive part of the ceremony was reserved to the last when Sister Mary of St. Leo dressed in the white Indian missionary habit of Holy Cross knelt at the altar railing and each priest gave her his priestly blessing, wishing her Godspeed in the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ. It was as though they were putting their seal upon Father Lohmann's promise—that "her name was written in heaven."

The same group of relatives and friends followed the departing missionary to the Union Station from which she left for Chicago where Sister was to join her traveling companion, Sister Joan of Arc, of the Indiana community. The crowd was so large that it formed a procession a block long. Officials at the Union Station entreated Sister Mary of St. Leo to go to the microphone and broadcast the purpose of such an **en masse** farewell. This Sister did after obtaining her Superior's consent. From the Panama

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[4] Mraianite Sisters of Holy Cross were sent from the Mother House at Le Mans, France in the year 1852, (November 5) but Sister Mary of St. Leo was the first Sister sent from the Louisiana Province of the Marianites.

[5] Transcription of Father Lohmann's address in archives, M.deS.C., New Orleans, La.

Limited train last snapshots were made by picture gleaners, last farewells uttered, and the train sped away out of sight.

In Chicago Sister was met by Mother M. Rose Elizabeth, and Mother M. Gertrude, at 3:00 p.m. December 11, Sister Mary of St. Leo and her companion, Sister Joan of Arc, left Chicago for San Francisco where they remained with the Holy Cross Sisters a month before they departed by boat for their final destination, Indiana. This departure occurred January 30. On January 20, the anniversary of Father Founder's death, Sister secured her British visa, which had been held up one month, and succeeded in getting passage on the Steamship **Rotti,** a Dutch ship of the Pacific Java Line.

After three months travelling through the Orient through the waters of the Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, stopping occasionally at the ports to permit the vessel to unload, the Sisters finally landed in India. Their trip started with Septuagesima Sunday, and they Completed the Lenten cycle by spending Easter aboard the Steamship **Rotti,** landing shortly afterwards in Bombay.

From Bombay to the interior of India, the Sisters traveled by railroad, rowboat and elephant until they reached their destination, a little jungle settlement of thatched roofs, clay stoves, and coal oil lamps, rice fields and oxen-drawn plows, howling jackals and native drums.[6]

Enroute to India Sister Mary of St. Leo wrote many graphic accounts of the lengthy sea voyage, which letters have been carefully filed for publication in book form at a later date. One of her letters written June 18, 1947, from Holy Rosary Convent, Tejgaon, Postoffice, Dacca District, Bengal, India, shows not only her versatile occupations but also the manner in which she is adapting herself to the work:

> The greater part of my time has been spent in striving to imbibe some knowledge of the ancient Bengali language with its queer script and **melee** of sounds. A course in art should definitely be a prerequisite for such a language. But this is better: We poor students pore over the volumes, scrawl a few odd-looking characters, venture to utilize our vocal chords and pronounce the words, and, like a bolt out of the blue, the echo comes: "That is correct, but we do not say it that way when we speak." Of course, this is rattled off in Bengali. Really, Mother, you would enjoy our efforts.

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[6] The New York **Catholic News**, February 8, 1947.

(I just had to take a few minutes off for a court session. Children are the same the world over. A composition book disappeared and we found it with the evidence draped all over it but the child denied it flatly. These natives are so skilled in deceit that they can stand without blinking an eye. It is positively innate. The session was a scream, and I was bubbling over inside at the comical side. Poor Sister Loretto, the Bengali Sister, was the interpreter and was doing her best to handle the case tactfully, while I, who was supposed to pass judgment, had to depend upon the results achieved by Sister Loretto.)

First of all, regarding the political situation: I know that you are wondering just how all this upset affects us. Well, as you know, the partition of Bengal and the Punjab took place the first week of June. This decision created the Pakistan and the Hindustan which the natives have clamored for so long, and the Eastern Bengal is Pakistan or under the Moslem rule, while the Western Bengal is to be governed by the Hindus. At present, neither side is satisfied and the question of boundaries hangs like a suspicious axe over them. All the key positions in the government are held by the Moslems but the better-educated group, if either can be called thus, is the Hindu. Whether the Moslems will force the Hindus to leave Eastern Bengal or whether they will torture them quietly until they leave, remains to be seen. As to the Christians, I do not think we will be molested at all if we remain neutral, for we are aiding both parties. Our schools an dinstitutions all number some Moslems and some Hindus. In Dacca, which is about five miles from Tejgaon, riots have taken place very frequently, and many lives have been lost, but nothing of the kind has occurred here. Our dear Lord will not permit anything to happen unless it be for the best, so we must place all our trust in Him, and pray to Him to open the eyes of these blinded people.

The two Sisters who are returning to India left San Francisco on May 23, and are due to land next Wednesday at Madras; where they will be stationed remains to be seen. We have all been playing checkers with them as only the two are coming back while three are returning to the States. I do not think that either Sister Mary of St. Vincent or I will be changed, however, for Sister is here in the capacity of nurse to care for the children, and I am supposed to teach Music and singing as there is a piano here, the only one near or far. It arrived about two weeks ago from Dacca. It was left there by the American soldiers. The base where they were stationed is just about three miles north of Tejgaon. The three Sisters who are returning to

America, Sisters Canisius, Francelia, and Marie Estelle, have not been able to touch anything in the shipping line, either passenger or cargo. Political conditions in Calcutta have tied up everything and transportation of troops is the present concern. When they do finally reach America, Sister Canisius hopes to see you. Her home is in Atlanta, and she is quite familiar with New Orleans.

The rainy season has set in, and while we have rain daily the temperature is not as yet forbidding. The other Sisters, all Northerners, cannot understand why I do not feel the heat and perspire as they do. Some have to change habits twice daily as they are wet even to the hem in their capes. Fortunately for me, Louisiana with its humid climate, was a good training ground for India. I hope I am not crowing too loudly. The rains have made the fields beautiful beyond description. Where, two months ago, I saw fields brown and burned, I now see on my weekly trips to Toomiliah acres and acres of lush green as the rice gets higher and higher. A ride through the rice fields at this time is a real treat. True, there are the inconveniences of a small native boat and a burning Indian sun, but the surrounding beauty compensates for these difficulties. Maybe you would enjoy the story of our last trip to Nagari.

We are so few here, and rather scattered, that any occasion for a gathering is a welcome one, and Sister Joan of Arc's Feast Day provided one. Sister Vincent was in Rangamattia. I went to Nagari alone from here—boarded the train here, and, imagine, one hour later, reached the spot, fifteen miles distant, where Cyril and another native met me and we walked over the mile path to the little boat. To enter it, the native holds a rod in the center, and in Sir Walter Raleigh fashion, assists one into the boat. We had hardly set out when the boat sprang a leak, and was fast filling with water. I held my skirts closely about me, and propped my feet on the cross bar in the boat. When we turned a bend in the stream, the native pulled the boat to land, and in his own native fashion, mended the leak with mud (!) How simple life is after all! We continued upstream, landed, and walked over the compound to the convent. Everybody enjoyed a good laugh at my experience, but it is strange that whenever Sister Joan of Arc or I go anywhere something unusual happens.

My classes in Gregorian Chant at Toomiliah are progressing nicely. I teach the sixteen Bengali Sisters there. They do not know a word of musical theory, and none of the Bengali music has ever been written, so think how new it is to them! The little organ is still a marvel to them to think that music actually comes from it. It is my fervent hope that at least one or two of the group advances sufficiently to learn to play. Despite the fact that they are by nature a rhythmical people, rhythm is their stumbling block. Their own music resembles the Gregorian in its free flowing rhythm. Brother Aloysius is trying to persuade me to put the Bengali music into writing. I have been going to Toomiliah on Saturday morning and returning that evening, but the train schedule has been changed again so I have to go on Friday evening.

Here vacation is, and is not; that is, each mission opens school on a different week. The crops determine the schedule. Rangamattia, the onion area, reopened two weeks ago; Nagari, the rice section, opened last week and Toomiliah and here resume classes on July 1. Since regular classes have stopped, I have a new department—sewing. This is a "must" for the girls, and a very strictly outlined syllabus is given. Last week we began with various running stich designs on burlap squares. The borders of old **saris** provide the thread for this primary work. As each **sari** is five and a half feet long, it provides a good bit. Cross-stitch, darns, buttonholes, embroidery, crochet, knitting, all form a part. I am taking crochet lessons every Saturday from Sister Augustine Marie. I still handle the needle like a shovel.

Here in Tejgaon everyone is well. We have one hundred eight children now, one little girl of three having arrived yesterday. Her mother was drowned and her father was too old to care for her. Unfortunately, here old men marry young girls who bear children and die young, then the man remarries. In this way it is not unusual to see old men of sixty or more with tiny babies. We are all still praying that the needed grant from the Bengal Government will be forthcoming so that the other four cottages may be erected. Things are very crowded now. The government is slow in acting.

Recently I met several of the Canadian Holy Cross who are working at Chittagong just north of Bengal. One of their number, Sister Claude, had a very serious tumor operation at the hospital in Dacca and has been at death's door since. She is only thirty-five, but all say she is a saint. With her were Sisters Damien, Jeanne, John and Leonella. All are lovely, and here in India all Holy Cross seems to be one. How I long to see the day when this will become a reality in America.

Sister Canisius arrived in Atlanta, Georgia, around the fourteenth of September, 1947. Reverend Edward P. McGrath, S.M., of Atlanta, Sister's native city, relates his interview with her in a letter to Mother Provincial dated Atlanta, Georgia, September 17:

> Sister Canisius, arrived from India the other day and is here on a visit to her mother. We had a long conversation. She was telling me how pleased they are to have Sister Leo. She has adapted herself admirably to her new surroundings, and is a great favorite with the rest of the community. She has had many amusing experiences and enjoys the life very much. I hope Sister Canisius can pass through New Orleans while in the States. She could give a very interesting conference on Missionary life in India.

A year of useful, happy life in India has passed for Sister Mary of St. Leo Cavell,—the first for her of perhaps many years in a fruitful crusade for souls under the banner of Holy Cross in pagan India. Indeed, India is another field of activity beckoning to the Marianites from afar. Two more Sisters are requested to augment the three who left in 1946. Volunteers are not wanting. Many among the younger group eagerly await their turn, but the mission fields of Louisiana, their native State, are also white to the harvest, "and the laborers are few." For the immediate present, those imbued with ardent desires to give themselves to foreign missionary work shall have to remember John Milton's famous line,

"They also serve who only stand and wait."[7]

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[7] John Milton, Ode to His Blindness.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE UNIFYING POWER OF THE CROSS

DESERVING of recognition at this Centennial epoch are Reverend Mother M. Rose Elizabeth, Superior General of the Sisters of Holy Cross and Sister M. Madeleva, President of Saint Mary's College, Holy Cross, Indiana, whose visits to Louisiana have linked anew in friendly affiliation the Louisiana with the Indiana Province of Holy Cross. Valuable educational opportunities have been opened to the Marianites through their cooperation. Strong are the ties of affection existing between Saint Mary's leaders and the present Provincial Superior, Mother Mary Xavier, as well as all the Sisters of the Louisiana Province.

Limitless expressions of gratitude ascend to God for the success of the Community in Louisiana. Fervent prayers are joined to all those acts of adoration that each day arise before the throne of the Blessed Sacrament in all the houses of the Province as well as those of France, the Northern Province and Canada. There is no better way to work in unison for common success than by having ardent and collective prayer of adoration and thanksgiving in each of the houses.

In all the houses of the Congregation, and at the Provincial House especially, the Sisters are convinced each day that the blessings of God so freely bestowed on the Community during the century now closing are for the whole Congregation as well as for this well-beloved Province which is now in particular thanking God.

The twenty-third of May, 1947 marked the completion of one hundred years of the Congregation of Holy Cross in Canada— one hundred years of labor and prayer and sacrifice that today give promise of abundant fruit. According to the statistics:

> Priests and Brothers today conduct 41 establishments—educational institutions, parishes, orphanages, chaplaincies, centers of Catholic action, works of social action, a printing plant, and a publishing house. The educational institutions teach on the primary or higher levels some 6,000 students. The parishes serve some 4,000 families. All this work is accomplished with a self-

> denial that seeks nothing but the good of souls and with a devotion that finds its only recompense in being identified with Christ.[1]

At the same time that the sons of our venerated Father Moreau were developing in Canada, his spiritual Daughters, the Sisters of Holy Cross and of the Seven Dolors, were also making gigantic strides at the price of crucifying immolation. Today, the Canadian branch of the Sisters, rooted like a strong and fruitful tree, has 119 establishments in 19 dioceses in Canada, in the United States, and in Bengal, India. In their six provinces, they conduct a classical college, a normal school, boarding schools, Parochial schools, and schools of domestic science. They teach about 32,000 students.

Two Sisters from the Louisiana Province, Sister Mary of St. Raphael (Gillis), Provincial Councillor, and Sister Mary of St. Anne (O'Connell) were privileged to attend the magnificent ceremonies at which the Fathers, Brothers, and Sisters of Holy Cross united in celebration of the joint Canadian Centennial May 23-30, 1947, at Saint Laurent, near Montreal, Province of Quebec, Canada. Glowing accounts of the Canadian Centennial were given upon their return by these Sisters.

On February 24, 1947, Mother Provincial struck the chord which sounded to the Community the signal for the approaching Centenary in Louisiana:

> We are fast approaching the centenary of our Community's advent to Louisiana. Each and everyone of you should consider this Centenary year as a holy year, and dedicate it in a very special way to the reconsecration of herself and of her efforts in a spirit of thanksgiving to God for all the blessings and graces the Community has enjoyed during the past one hundred years.
>
> I have cause to be very thankful for the reason that God has deigned to use the members of my father's family (the Haggertys) in this Province without interruption for the past ninety-one years. You will pardon the pride that I take in mentioning this fact, for I rejoice especially in having lived to see this memorable event.
>
> Our gratitude first should tend towards our Founder, and then to our pioneer Sisters who bore the heat and the burden of the day and suffered hardships and sacrifices known to God alone. Let us, then, during this Centennial year show our gratitude to them by keeping up a perpetual crusade of Masses and prayers for our dear Father Founder, our Foundress, and our deceased

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[1] Circular Letter No. 24, Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., New York Generalate, November 21, 1946.

> Sisters that they may be our intercessors before God to help us in our great need for vocations. Father Founder would wish our dear deceased Sisters to share with him in these Masses. Let us hope that by them we may liberate many of our dear Sisters from Purgatory and have them enjoying the Beatific Vision while we are celebrating our Centenary on earth!
>
> My plan for our Centenary year is, beginning with March, that each house should send a Mass stipend for one Mass a week, that is, four a month, for the above intention. There are eighteen houses in Louisiana, so we will have that many masses being offered each week, averaging three each for four days of the week and two each for the remaining three days.
>
> By the end of the school session, I shall have crystallized the plans for our Centennial pageant. It will be presented by the schools of the Province, each one participating to the same degree as another. This is as it should be. It will create not only interest and enthusiasm in our schools, but also in the towns and will be an incentive for a larger delegation to attend the ceremonies of the day. The plan is very simple, it will be worked out without loss of time and with minimum amount of expense and scenery. It should prove something very beautiful to behold and to remember.

Approximately 1,000 Masses were offered as a Centennial gift, for the Founder, Foundress and deceased members of the Congregation during this Centennial year.

Not only Masses are offered constantly for the repose of the souls of the deceased members, but there is in the Community a custom which insures the remembrance of the Sisters in the day's devotions. The day preceding the anniversary of a Sister's death, her obituary notice is read to remind the Sisters to offer the Mass and the Way of the Cross and other devotions of the following day for her soul. Upon the death of a religious, Masses are at once offered in each house of the Congregation and special prayers are offered by each member for the dear departed one. Father Moreau termed these suffrages of Rule "among the most precious consolations offered by the community to a religious soul." Another constant reminder for the Sisters to pray for their deceased members is the box of cards, bearing the Sisters' names, at the entrance to the refectory. Many an ejaculation for the repose of the souls of the Sisters is offered by Sisters as they enter or leave the refectory. The card with the Sister's name is removed from the first section of the box and placed in the second one so that every member in turn is remembered.

Arthur A. de la Houssaye
General Chairman, Centennial Celebration

May 6, 1947 marked the date on which Mr. de la Houssaye called a meeting of the General Arrangements Committee. Thirty-two of the forty-six members—all outstanding business men in the City of New Orleans—attended this meeting. Many others who accepted the invitation to serve on the General Committee were unable to attend the meeting and expressed their regrets.

Mother Mary Xavier was certainly inspired when she decided to ask Mr. Arthur de la Houssaye to act as the General Chairman of the Centennial celebration. Besides being a devoted friend of Mother, Mr. de la Houssaye's family dearly loves the Marianites and was deeply interested in making the Centennial celebration far surpass even Mother Provincial's expectations. He knew Mother's great desire to leave nothing undone to make the celebration a never-to-be-forgotten event, and one that would remain deeply engraved in the hearts and the minds of every member of Holy Cross.

At the May 6, 1947 meeting, Mr. de la Houssaye gave an outline of the plans already formulated. He appointed the different committees, and for each a Chairman with at least several men to assist him.

BANQUET

Taylor Walet,
Charles A. O'Niell
William G. Zetzmann
Philip J. Schoen, Jr.
Charles E. de la Vergne

PUBLICITY

William Fitzpatrick
George Schneider
Larry Dupuy
E. Davis McCutchon

FINANCE

Andre Lapeyre
William Leftwich
Joseph A. Danna
James Gilly, Jr.
Ernest B. Norman, Sr.
Henry C. McCarthy

DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

F. J. Selman
Neville Levy
William Dardis
Dornelius E. Gorman
Charles G. Mosely
Joseph P. Skelly

PAGEANT

L. T. Kuhner
Jay R. Schoen
Bernard J. McCloskey
Harold Zeringer
Joseph S. D'Antoni
Stanley McDermott

MASS

Bentley G. Byrnes
Maurice J. Hartson
Harry McEnerny, Jr.
Edward A. Haggerty, Sr.
Ernest J. Robin
James J. Impastato

PROTOCOL

John V. Connor
W. Joseph Rouchell
Jose Monasterio
Ernest Lee Jahncke
Charles I. Denechaud
Hon. de Lesseps Morrison

HOUSING COMMITTEE

John T. Thomann
Roy S. Keenan
Mrs. Henry R. Lentz
William Ward

TRANSPORTATION

Streuby Drumm
Douglass V. Freret
George D. Tessier
Walter Simpson
H. Ashton Thomas
George J. Wegmann
Joseph Clesi

Members of the General Arrangements Committee

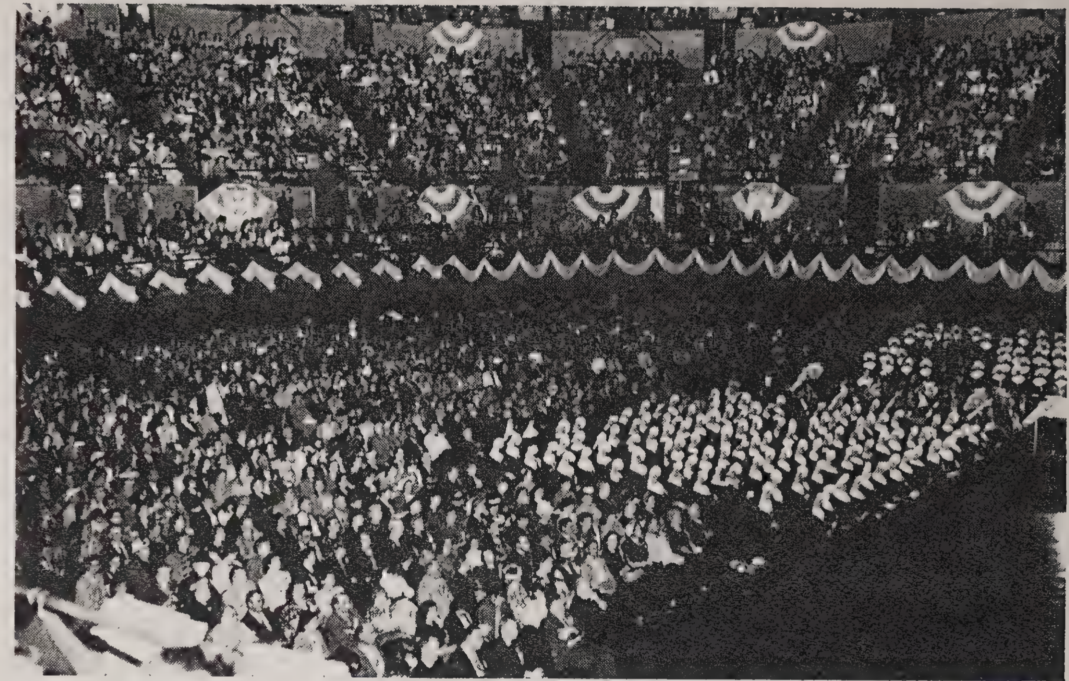
Honorable de Lesseps Morrison, Mayor of New Orleans.

Honorable Charles A. O'Niell, Chief Justice, Supreme Court, State of Louisiana.

Messrs. Thomas Bacon, Bentley G. Byrnes, Joseph Clesi, Dr. John V. Connor, Dr. Joseph A. Danna, Dr. Joseph D'Antoni, Messrs. Charles I. Denechaud, William Dardis, Streuby Drumm, Charles E. de la Vergne, Dr. Larry Duouy, Messrs. William Fitzpatrick, Douglass V. Freret, James Gilly, Jr., R. J. Glas, Dr. Cornelius E. Gorman, Messrs. Edward A. Haggerty, Sr., Maurice J. Hartson, James J. Impastato, Commodore Ernest Lee Jahncke, Messrs. L. T. Kuhner, Andre Lapeyre, William Leftwich, Captain Neville Levy, Messrs. Henry C. McCarthy, Bernard J. McCloskey, E. Davis McCutchon, Stanley McDermott, Harry McEnerny, Jr., Charles G. Moseley, Ernest B. Norman, Sr., James J. Reiss, Ernest J. Robin, W. Joseph Rouchell, George Schneider, Jay R. Schoen, Philip J. Schoen, Jr., F. J. Selman, Walter Simpson, Joseph P. Skelly, George Tessier, Doctor H. Ashton Thomas, Messrs. Taylor Walet, George J. Wegmann, Harold Zeringer, William G. Zetzmann.

Local School Committees and their Chairmen

Academy of the Holy Angels, Mrs. Arthur J. Keenan.
Holy Cross Alumnae, Miss Bessie Sanders.
St. Cecilia School, Mr. Adolphe J. Poillon.
St. Basil Academy, Plaquemine, Mr. Philip Castro.
Sts. Peter and Paul School, Mrs. Loretta McCue.
St. Francis de Sales Academy, Houma, Mr. Burkard Chauvin.
St. John Academy, Franklin, Mr. Ernest Boudreaux.
Academy of the Immaculate Conception, Opelousas, Mrs. Hebert and Mrs. Bordelon.
St. Charles Academy, Lake Charles, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Daspit.
Sacred Heart Academy, Morgan City, Mr. Leonard Weis.
Holy Name of Mary School, Algiers, Mr. Roy S. Keenan.



Section of Audience At Civic Reception for Centennial In Municipal Auditorium

St. Edmund School, Eunice, Mr. Edward Veillon.

St. Rita School, Miss Mercedes Discon.

Incarnate Word School, Mr. Thomas Bacon.

St. Alphonsus School, Ocean Springs, Mississippi, Dr. Frank Schmidt.

Sacred Heart High School, Ville Platte, Mrs. Albert Tate.

St. Agnes School, Jefferson Highway, Mrs. Henry R. Lentz.

St. Joseph School, Lower Coast, Algiers, Mr. William Ward.

St. Mary of the Angels School, Mr. George De Jaham.

Little Flower School, Arnaudville, Mr. Jules Darby.

These Chairmen of the various school committees functioned very efficiently through their respective Reverend Pastors.

These committees took care of everything, from the Pontifical Mass at the Cathedral to the transportation services for the children of the schools throughout Louisiana, under Marianite direction, who participated in the pageant the evening of April 13, 1948, at the Municipal Auditorium. This formed part of the Civic Reception that evening. Thirty-two of the forty-eight members of the General Committee attended the first meeting; seventy of the school committee members were present at the July 14 meeting, which was called for the purpose of acquainting the Chairmen and their committees of the program which had been developed with the wholehearted approval of Their Excellencies, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel, S.T.D. and Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, D.D. The October 13 meeting further crystallized the plans for the Banquet and Civic Reception, and showed that the Committees had been very active in completing the work assigned them.

Vigorous, energetic and enterprisingly by nature, Mr. de la Houssays succeeded in imparting his own enthusiasm for the realization of a glorious Centennial celebration for the Marianites to those who cooperated with him on the various committees. His enthusiastic spirit dominated his meetings to such an extent that his co-workers imbibed the interest he had for the work. October 13 reports from the various committees of work accomplished were an earnest proof of the interest all shared with the General Chairmen in the Centennial plans.

The pageant, **A Canticle of Praise,** planned by Mother Mary Xavier, Provincial Superior of the Marianite Sisters in Louisiana, did not give Marianite history in detail, but tended more to offer what its name implies, a canticle of praise to God for His blessings upon the work of the past one hundred years rather than an **expose** of the Community's achievements. The participants were selected from the Marianites' ten high schools throughout Louisiana, each school contributed fifty girls to the pageant. These out-of-town students formed the **prologue** to the pageant, which was to be very colorful, in that each group of girls represented the flowers from their section of the state. Work on the provision of seven hundred costumes was commenced in the latter part of the month of September, 1947, when many mothers from the various Cooperative clubs attached to the schools volunteered to take care of their respective group.

It was most gratifying to see and to feel the enthusiastic response given by those who attended the first organizational meetings. All expressed appreciation of the privilege they felt was theirs to have been invited to serve on the Committes.

Each committee appointed on May 6, 1947, immediately began to work on its assigned task. The program included:

— FIRST DAY —

CIVIC RECEPTION
MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM

TUESDAY, APRIL THIRTEENTH

8:00 P. M.

PROGRAM

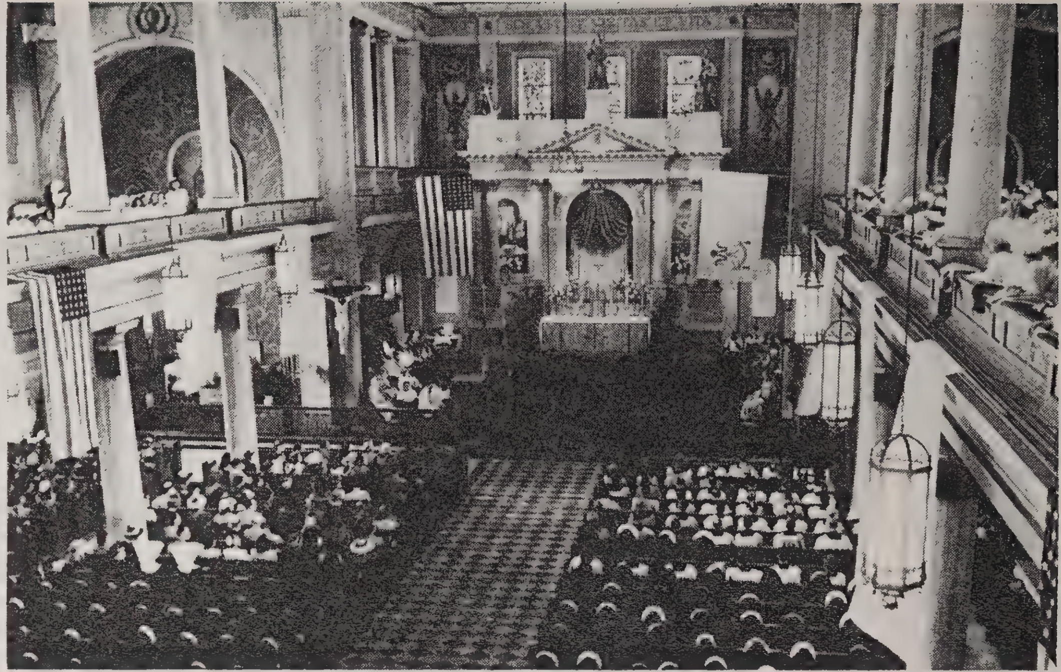
OVERTURE .... Orchestra

MASTER OF CEREMONIES .... Mr. Arthur A. de la Houssaye

AN APPRECIATION FROM NEW ORLEANS
The Honorable de Lesseps S. Morrison,
Mayor of the City of New Orleans

THE MARIANITE SISTERS OF HOLY CROSS
The Very Reverend Leo Flood, C.S.C.

THE MOST REVEREND
JOSEPH FRANCIS RUMMEL, S.T.D., LL.D.,
Archbishop of New Orleans



CENTENNIAL PONTIFICAL MASS

St. Louis Cathedral

— SECOND DAY —

WEDNESDAY, APRIL FOURTEENTH

Solemn Pontifical Mass of Thanksgiving

10:00 A. M.

ST. LOUIS CATHEDRAL

HIS EXCELLENCY, THE MOST REVEREND JOSEPH FRANCIS RUMMEL, S.T.D., LL.D.	Celebrant
VERY REV. ALBERT F. COUSINEAU, C.S.C.	Assistant Priest
VERY REVEREND DANIEL C. O'MEARA, S.M.	Deacon
REVEREND HENRY C. BEZOU	Subdeacon
VERY REVEREND HARRY L. CRANE, S.J.	Deacons of Honor
VERY REV. EDWARD P. McGRATH, S.M.	
REVEREND GERALD T. RIEF	Attendants to the Bishops
VERY REVEREND PETER F. QUINN, S.M.	
REVEREND MOSES J. HABEB	
REVEREND ALCUIN KAMMER, O.F.M.	
REVEREND JULES TOUPS	
REVEREND LEONARD ROBIN	
REVEREND ANTHONY WEGMANN	
REVEREND GEORGE BODIN	
VERY REVEREND CHARLES J. PLAUCHE	Master of Ceremonies
REVEREND EDWARD KENNEDY, O.M.I.	

SERMON

THE MOST REVEREND JULES B. JEANMARD, D.D.
Bishop of Lafayette

Notre Dame Seminary Choir—Reverend Robert Stahl, S.M., Director
Reverend Mr. Burkeley, Organist

— SECOND DAY —

Centennial Banquet

1:00 P. M.

GRAND BALLROOM — ROSEVELT HOTEL

INVOCATION........Most Rev. Joseph Francis Rummell, S.T.D., LL.D.
Archbishop of New Orleans

TOASTMASTER........Mr. Arthur A. de la Houssaye

THE MARIANITE SISTERS IN NEW ORLEANS ARCHDIOCESE........The Reverend Leonard Robin

THE MARIANITE SISTERS IN SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA........The Right Rev. Monsignor Louis H. Boudreaux

BENEDICTION........The Most Reverend Charles P. Greco, D.D.,
Bishop of Alexandria

MUSIC........Southern Airs

OPEN HOUSE

Academy of the Holy Angels
3500 St. Claude Avenue
3:00 P. M. to 6:00 P. M.

SOLEMN BENEDICTION OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

Right Reverend Monsignor William J. Castel, Celebrant

Reverend Michael J. Larkin, S.M., Deacon

Reverend Joachim Markus, O.F.M., Sub-deacon

Campus of the Academy
of the Holy Angels
6:00 P. M.

Centennial Pontifical Requiem

Chapel of Our Lady of Sorrows

— THIRD DAY —

THURSDAY, APRIL FIFTEENTH

Solemn Pontifical Requiem Mass

for the deceased Marianite Sisters of Louisiana
and their Benefactors
8:00 A. M.

CHAPEL OF OUR MOTHER OF SORROWS

3503 North Rampart Street

MOST REVEREND LOUIS ABEL CAILLOUET, D.D.........Celebrant

VERY REVEREND ALBERT F. COUSINEAU, C.S.C.
Assistant Priest

VERY REVEREND WILLIAM F. MC GINNIS, C.S.C...............Deacon

REVEREND JOSEPH M. BRANNIGAN, C.S.C....................Sub-deacon

REVEREND MICHAEL J. LARKIN, S.M. }
VERY REVEREND PETER F. QUINN, S.M. } Deacons of Honor

BROTHER JOSEPH WISEMAN, C.S.C.............Master of Ceremonies

The joy of these Centennial Days was heightened by the presence of many distinguished guests among whom were the following:

From the New York Generalate—
The Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., Superior General of the Congregation of Holy Cross.

From Montreal, Province of Quebec, Canada—
The Very Reverend William F. McGinnis, C.S.C., Provincial Superior, Angelo-Canadian Province, of the Fathers of Holy Cross.

From Notre Dame University, Notre Dame, Indiana—
The Reverend Christopher O'Toole, C.S.C., Vice-Provincial Superior of the United States Province, Fathers of Holy Cross.

Reverend Michael J. Larkin, S.M.—
Pastor of St. Michael's Church, Wheeling, West Virginia.

From Prècignè, Sarthe, France—

Our Reverend Mother General, Reverend Mother Mary of St. Odile, M.deS.C., Sister Mary of St. Cajetan, M.deS.C., First Assistant General; Sister Mary of St. Veronica, M.deS.C., General Treasurer.

From Holy Cross, Indiana—

Reverend Mother M. Rose Elizabeth, C.S.C., Superior General of the Sisters of Holy Cross, St. Mary's Convent, Holy Cross, Indiana. Mother M. Una, C.S.C., Provincial Superior of the Mid-Western Province, Sisters of Holy Cross.

From Montreal, Province of Quebec, Canada—

Mother M. Elizabeth, C.S.C., and Sister M. Patricia, C.S.C., Sisters of Holy Cross representing Mother M. Maximilienne, C.S.C., Superior General of the Canadian Community of Holy Cross.

FROM THE NORTHERN PROVINCE OF THE MARIANITE SISTERS OF HOLY CROSS

From Our Lady of Princeton, Princeton, New Jersey—

Mother Mary of St. Louis, M. de S. C., Provincial Superior of the Northern Province, and Sister Mary of St. Paula, Councillor.

From St. Vincent de Paul Institute, Tarrytown, New York—

Sister Mary of St. Victor, M. de S. C., Superior.

From St. Louis Academy, Pleasant Plains, New York—

Sister Mary of the Immaculate Conception, M. de S. C., Superior.

From the French Hospital, New York City—

Sister Mary of St. Magdalen, Superior.

From St. Joseph's Hospital, Lac Megantic, P. Q., Canada—

Sister Mary of St. Alexis, M. de S. C., Superior.

The musical script for the Pageant was written and directed by Dr. Ernest E. Schuyten, Dean of Loyola University School of Music. Reverend Robert J. Stahl, S.M., directed the choir of Sisters and Dr. Schuyten directed the choruses by the Loyola Choral Society; Mr. Edward Dillon was Stage Director; Mrs. J. Lewis Evans and Miss Francis Bush were in charge of choreography and

After Solemn Pontifical Mass

L. Reese Spangenberg designed the scenery and controlled the lighting effects.

The pageant alone, which Mother Mary Xavier (Haggerty) numbers as her twentieth to be presented by Marianite students, was an entertaining and unique item on the program. Composed of the prologue of the out-of-town students, previously mentioned, it presented five beautiful dances, the first representing the **Magnolia**, the state flower, by fifty high-school girls from Plaquemines; the second, a **Rose** garden, fifty girls from Lake Charles. This was followed by one hundred twenty girls from Opelousas, Ville Platte and Eunice, who represented the **Azalea** group as that section of the country forms part of the Azalea trail famous in Louisiana. Then the **Water Hycinth** group was made up of girls from Morgan City, Houma, Franklin, one hundred twenty in all. In these localities the streams are literally choked in the spring by the water hyacinths floating upon their surface. The **Wistaria** group came from the Holy Name of Mary School, Algiers, as Algiers secluded nooks. All of these groups, four hundred in all, presented a colorful Louisiana garden. This prologue was followed by the historic panorama of the Community in Louisiana, and was by its Guardian Angel, while Holy Angels Academy had its group of approximately four hundred angels. The **Community Angel** and the **Centennial Angel** narrated most of the history; and each school's **Guardian Angel** gave the history of its own school.

With God's abundant blessings on all those who took part in the Centennial celebration, every item on the program and every last detail proved the value of the careful preparation they had received. The high plane of excellence and the successful issue of the Celebration was acknowledged in the very generous tribute of His Excellency, Most Reverend Joseph Francis Rummel.

> Your pageant was simply magnificent in conception and execution. It not only protrayed most brilliantly the story of your Community's growth and development, but also presented on a very high level the spiritual and cultural ideals which your devoted Sisters instill into the minds and hearts of their pupils. It is a pity that a composition of this magnitude can be produced only once and then to a comparatively limited audience. I am confident that all who were privileged to attend the pageant were inspired and enthused.
>
> The dinner was another very fine feature of your program, largely attended, splendidly conducted and characterized by an atmosphere of admiration and good will towards your Community. Mr. Arthur de la Houssaye deserves much credit for the efficient manner in which he organized and carried through

every feature of your program. Of the Solemn Pontifical Mass I am less able to speak than others, but I do believe that it was a dignified climax in your plans and a most fitting expression of the dominant sentiment of the Centennial celebration, namely rendering thanks to God for the inspirations and graces with which He supported the efforts of the Community throughout these one hundred years of its operation in Louisiana and Mississippi. Most Reverend Bishop Jeanmard, in his sermon, bore eloquent testimony to these underlying sentiments.

Like all Divine works, the Congregation of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross in Louisiana was established in suffering and privation. The poverty of its first years verged on heroism. Cramped quarters, lack of funds, want of cloth for religious habits, improper diet, these and other trials were not lacking to the Marianites who planted the tree of Holy Cross in the Pelican State. These trials strengthened the faith of the pioneers and forced them to acknowledge their dependence upon an all-loving, all-wise Providence. Today the harvest of those sacrifices is evident in the twenty Elementary schools and the ten High Schools or Academies conducted by the Sisters. Memorable dates in Mission history mark the opening of these schools and academies:

1857—Saint Basil Academy, Plaquemine;
1857—The Immaculate Conception Academy, Opelousas;
1869—St. Charles School, Pensacola, Florida, closed 1871.
1870—The St. Francis de Sales Academy, Houma;
1871—The St. John Academy, Franklin;
1882—St. Charles Academy, Lake Charles;
1887—St. Alphonsus School, Ocean Springs, Mississippi;
1891—St. Joseph School, Arnaudville, closed 1919;
1893—Sacred Heart Academy, Morgan City;
1904—St. Henry School, Jennings, closed in 1916;
1912—St. Edmund School, Eunice;
1938—Sacred Heart School, Ville Platte;
1947—Reopening of school at Arnaudville, the new school being dedicated to The Little Flower.
*1882—St. Augustine's School for the colored race, Plaquemine, La.

New Orleans City missions matched in age and vigor those of the country missions:

1869—St. Vincent de Paul School, closed in 1881;
1873—Sts. Peter and Paul School;

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*Still in operation.

Scene from Prologue To Centennial Pageant "A Canticle of Praise"

1874—Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School, closed in 1899;
1881—St. Mary's School, Carrollton, closed in 1886;
1891—Holy Name of Mary School, Algiers;
1892—St. Patrick's Parochial School, closed in 1900;
1899—St. Cecilia Parochial School;
1921—St. Rita School;
1923—Incarnate Word School;
1941—St. Agnes' School;
1941—St. Joseph School, Lower Coast, Algiers;
1945—St. Mary of the Angels School;
1946—The beginning of foreign mission work in conjunction with the Sisters of Holy Cross, Indiana Province, in Tejgaon, Dacca District, Bengal, India.

Glancing over these dates, the reader comes across at least five schools opened, and after a short or longer period, closed. This was a period of beginnings and progress, when failures often ministered to success. Often a small school had to be closed to provide sufficient personnel for an older-established or larger one. One of these schools closed since 1919 (St. Joseph's, Arnaudville, Louisiana) was replaced by a modern Little Flower School, and reopened by the Marianites. Twenty-eight years the Marianites served in St. Joseph's, the old school in Arnaudville; twenty-eight years elapsed before the school was reopened to the joy of the Sisters, the Bishop of the Diocese, His Excellency, Most Reverend Jules B. Jeanmard, D.D., and of the Catholic people in Arnaudville. Pleasant relations begun with the people of Arnaudville over a half century ago continue unbroken to the present day.

The walls of the New Orleans Provincial House and of its Novitiate remain silent witnesses of the first steps in the religious life of many Marianites. These stones have sheltered the learning and the holiness of the Sisters' predecessors, engaged at one time in education or manual labor. Humble gratitude ascends from the hearts of the Marianites to those who preceded them and spent themselves in the same cause as they do today in the houses of this Province where the tree of Holy Cross has been planted. Others continue today with modern methods the work of those who have gone before. The time of pioneering is over, and its trials have passed with it. The new Century opens with rich promise. Today the Congregation's Superiors have a larger number of well-prepared subjects to establish and carry out improved programs of instruction. The plans for future construction of new schcool facilities evident in all the houses of this Province testify to the improved financial condition of the Congregation.

Very Reverend Basil Moreau gave Saint Joseph to the Marianites as patron of their Congregation, and devoted some of his most beautiful writings to this holy Patriarch. The Sisters' gratitude rises to their heavenly patroness, Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, and to her worthy Spouse, Saint Joseph. May Our Lord be praised for having given the Congregation of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross a place of distinction in His holy Church! May He be praised and glorified for having deigned to employ the Marianites for a century in Louisiana. He has given to each Marianite Sister of Holy Cross the fruits of her Masses, of her Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, of her visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and her more frequent prayers, of her studies and of her manual labor. May Very Reverend Basil Moreau, Founder of the Congregation, be thanked for having put all these means at the Sisters' disposal so that they can tend constantly towards perfection and strive to attain a high place in heaven. May Mary, Our Lady of the Seven Dolors, offer to God this family of Holy Cross, which must more than ever be determined to accomplish faithfully its supernatural mission.

It is fitting, as the Marianites once more turn to their venerated Founder, in gratitude, that the exhortation[3] of Father Moreau's worthy successor, the present Superior General of Holy Cross, Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, should close this history:

> Father Moreau's first miracle[4] which we hope the Church will one day recognize, is his work—the Religious of Holy Cross, whose achievements we have endeavored to make better known. The Congregation of Holy Cross in all its branches is the authentic testimony of the labors of our common Father. It grows and expands each day—strong and apostolic, after having overcome a thousand difficulties. So I exhort you once more to realize that one of the first duties of each Religious of Holy Cross is to make known by prayer and action, to those within the Community and to those outside its walls, the life, the works, the writings, and the virtues of our venerated Father Moreau. We must by our zeal hasten his day of glorification. It lies in our power to establish his reputation for sanctity. This is a duty we owe in justice. It is an obligation imposed by our own interests, if we rightly understand them. I ask God's special blessing on those who labor to procure the canonization of our Founder.[5]

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[3] Circular Letter No. 24 from Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., dated the Generalate, New York City, November 21, 1946.

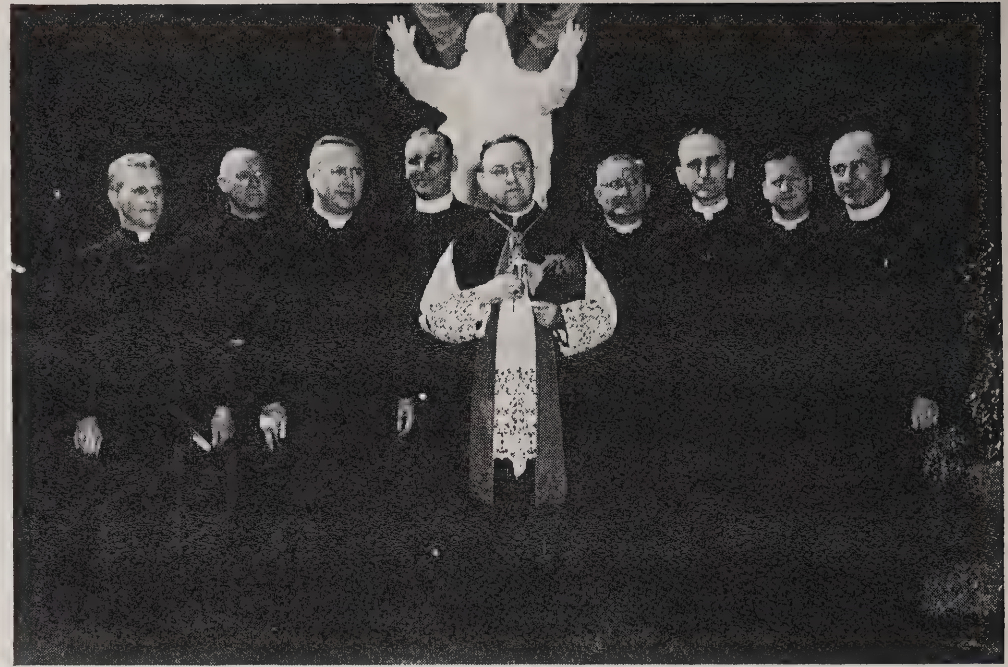
[4] In these judgements, we submit ourselves fully to the decree of Urban VIII, and we have no intention of anticipating the decision of the Church.

[5] Circular Letter No. 24, Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.C., dated the Generalate, New York City, November 21, 1946.

THE HEART OF THE PROVINCIAL HOUSE

EPILOGUE

"Through Christ, our Lord, Amen."



Left to right, front row: *Very Reverend* WILLIAM F. MCGINNIS, C.S.C.; *Very Reverend* ALBERT F. COUSINEAU, C.S.C.; *His Excellency, the Most Reverend* LOUIS ABEL CAILLOUET, D.D., *Auxiliary Bishop of the New Orleans Archdiocese; Reverend* CHRISTOPHER O'TOOLE C.S.C.; *Very Reverend* PETER F. QUINN, S.M.

Left to right, back row: *Reverend* JOACHIM MARKUS, O.F.M.; *Reverend* MICHAEL J. LARKIN, S.M.; *Reverend* JOSEPH M. BRANNIGAN, C.S.C.; *Reverend* JOSEPH WISEMAN, C.S.C.

EPILOGUE

WHEN THE YEAR 1948 reached the twenty-seventh day of April a Century had passed since Mother Mary of the Five Wounds (Paillon), Sister Mary of the Nativity (Daley), and Sister Mary of Calvary (Robineau) left Lebanon, Kentucky, to assist the Brothers of Holy Cross in the management of Saint Mary's Orphan Boys' Asylum. The marvelous changes occurring in the world during those one hundred years are nowhere more marked than in our own United States. When the Marianites came to Louisiana, the young Republic was battling with the Abolitionist Movement, quarrels over slave and non-slave States were absorbing the attention of the political leaders. Shortly afterwards, in 1849, during the Gold Rush period of United States history, prairie schooners, or covered wagons, carried expenditions to California in quest of gold. The Marianite pioneers came, too, to seek gold in Louisiana—the gold of immortal souls—and to salvage it for Almighty God.

From its historic heights, the Congregation of the Marianites of Holy Cross has witnessed the manifold changes at home and abroad, and experienced them within herself. She has maintained the steady pace herself, and that without separating herself from the Source of strength, which alone can sustain religious unto the end. Faithful to the maxim of her holy founder, Reverend Basil Moreau, that "those who nourish themselves upon the fruit of the tree of the cross shall not taste death," as well as those of Saint Jean Vianney, **Cure d'Ars**, to their Foundress, Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors: "All that is at the foot of the cross is good—it is excellent!", the Sisters have found these words soul-lifting and sustaining in moments of trial. The Congregation, which holds these principles before its members, has arrived at the celebration of its Century of life in Louisiana, crowned with honor and veneration, approved by God and acclaimed by man. Faithful to the memory of their Founder, (to whom under God the Congregation owes its existence, and with it the great means of sanctification), the Marianites treasure the tomb that encloses Father Moreau's mortal remains and reverence the memory of this saintly Founder.

On the twentieth of January, 1873, blessed by His Holiness, Pope Pius IX, Father Moreau slept in the Lord. His obsequies were celebrated in the chapel of his devoted and faithful children, the Marianite Sisters, and his remains were interred in the mortuary chapel of the private cemetery donated to the community by the municipal authorities of the city of Le Mans. There a slab of marble is erected, testifying to the piety of his relatives, the obedience of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, and the gratitude of the former pupils of Holy Cross. Here before their Founder's tomb novices in their first fervor, Sisters in moments of trial or triumph, as well as the aged and the infirm members in their patience, loved to pray.

January 20, 1923 marked the fiftieth year since the soul of Very Reverend Basil Moreau returned to God in the humble cell where he had retired, near the Mother House, assisted by his daughters, the Marianite Sisters, who to the last were devoted to him. On this occasion, the General Council in France asked His Excellency, Bishop Grente of Le Mans, the authorization to make the necessary arrangements for the exhumation of Very Reverend Father Moreau's body. His family permitted the Congregation to construct a vault where the precious remains could be placed. The Rules of the Congregation prescribe a service every year in the Mother House on the anniversary of the Founder's death, but the Sisters' filial piety moved them to do more on this Fiftieth Anniversary. A Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated in all the houses of the Congregation with the children of the schools present to unite their prayers with those of the whole Congregation for the repose of the soul of the Venerated Founder of Holy Cross and to obtain through his intercession the development of the good works to which he consecrated his life. Affectionate was the response to the call which came from the Mother House for him who created the religious family of the Marianites amidst trials and sufferings of all kinds. The Sisters from the Canadian and Indiana branches of Holy Cross contributed also to the construction of the vault by a generous offering. The Holy Cross Fathers joined their contributions to those of the Congregation and promised to be present at the exhumation of the body of Father Moreau.

A Circular Letter dated November 15, 1938 from Precigne, France, written by Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien, cited events that had occurred that week: After twelve years of constant efforts on the part of Very Reverend J. Donahue, C.S.C., the Fathers of Holy Cross were educated in the "cult of Father Moreau" and at last recognized him as their Founder. Previous to this time, many of the Holy Cross Fathers did not even know Father Moreau. The Holy Cross Fathers took possession of the magnificent Church of Holy Cross, which is today a parish church. The General Council of the Mother House, after mature deliberation, thought that the place for the Venerated Father Founder was in the crypt of that church where he made the Way of the Cross daily and prayed so often before a picture of the Holy Face.

Most Rev. GEORGE GRENTE

Bishop of Le Mans

The transferring of the remains of the Venerated Founder took place November 9, 1938, at two o'clock in the afternoon. The new Superior General of the Fathers of Holy Cross, the Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, recited the prayers over the remains in the Cemetery of Holy Cross, in the presence of many Priests and Brothers, of the General Council, of the Superiors from the various houses in France, and also a great many of the Marianites as well as other religious. The funeral procession was then formed. All hearts were oppressed and many a tear was shed when the Sisters saw the Venerated Founder leave the chapel where, for sixty-five years, he had received their visits of devotion, respect, and love. It was consoling to think that he would receive greater honor in his new resting place, and that one day he might receive the honors of the altar.

When the procession entered the church, a large gathering had already formed and His Excellency, Bishop Grente, was in the sanctuary. After **Lauds** had been chanted, the Very Reverend Father General read a very humble and touching Act of Reparation, an apology for the neglect that the sons of the Very Reverend Father Moreau had shown towards him. The prayers of Absolution were then sung, presided over by the Bishop. The coffin, carried by Fathers and Brothers of Holy Cross, was lowered into the crypt and placed in an excavation over which a lamp burns before a picture of the Holy Face. Opposite the tomb is an altar, which was consecrated the ninth of November, 1937, under the title of Holy Cross. The members of the Congregation have the privilege of hearing Holy Mass in the presence of the remains of their venerated Founder.

The following day, November 10, the body of Mother Mary of the Seven Dolors (Leocadie Gascoin) was also exhumed. The ceremony was presided over by the Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, assisted by Father Gouta, Chaplain of Saint Joseph's Clinic and Father Calendini, Chaplain of the Mother House. As on the day previous, the General Council and many of the Sisters were present. Added to these were the Fathers of Holy Cross and several invited guests amongst whom was a distant cousin of the venerated Mother Foundress, Miss L. Barreau. What a touching spectacle it was for all the Sisters when, the earth having been removed, they were able to see the bones of their dearly-beloved Mother Foundress. A part of the skull and most of the principal bones of the body had been preserved, but all the rest had disappeared, with the exception of some bits of the clothing and pieces of the coffin. These precious relics were placed in an oak casket lined with lead, which was sealed in the presence of the spectators. Prayers for the repose of the soul were said and **Lauds** were recited. Then the Very Reverend Father Cousineau gave the absolution. The remains of the Mother Foundress were brought into the funeral chapel while the beautiful anthem, **In Paradisum** was sung. The coffin was placed in the excavation from which the remains of Very Reverend Father Moreau had been taken. May the Church soon pay fitting honor to these two holy Founders of Holy Cross! and may those who follow in their footsteps one day share with them their happiness in heaven!

The Sisters rejoice at the privilege of reciting the Community prayers in the presence of the precious relics of their Foundress. It is a stimulus to their devotion and recalls to mind the lessons taught by the Foundress, and strengthening them to endure arduous labors in nursing the sick or in educating the youth entrusted to their care.

With Father Moreau this volume began; with him, let it close. The Superior General of Holy Cross (Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, C.S.S.) in a Circular Letter to the Congregation dated at the Generalate, Washington, D. C. November 26, 1942, sketched the exceptional qualities of the Founder of Holy Cross which might well serve here as a closing impression of this great servant of God:

> Our beloved Founder was a man of study, prayer and suffering. He is entitled to a place among the great mystics. The rapturous sublimity of his writings on the spiritual life reveals an author habituated to a heavenly atmosphere. But he was nonethe-less a man of action. Ardent in work and alive to new movements, he knew how to shake off prejudices and demonstrate an independence of spirit of the highest type. Consequently, in his thoughts and acts there was a spirit of initiative akin to that coming from Divine inspiration, a perseverance even to heroism, a charity which "rejoices with the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."[1] The gracious charity of Father Moreau had a supernatural force. In a letter to him shortly after his canonical Visit to America, Father Sorin says: "Many a time since your departure I have admired the prodigious energy that heaven has given you to accomplish your great mission. We are but pygmies in the presence of Your Reverence."

Father Moreau needs no tribute from men. His works remain, and are a living, glorious monument which will perpetuate his memory as the ages move on till time will be no more. The words of counsel with which he was wont to encourage and to guide the first generous Brothers, Fathers of Holy Cross, and Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross, still echo from his tomb with inspiring force and meaning. From Notre Dame, Indiana, in 1935 came the French edition of Father Moreau's **Circular Letters**[2], and later, the English translation of these letters by Reverend Heston, C.S.C. In the New Orleans Provincial House of the Marianites and in everyone of the Community's houses in Louisiana at the close of breakfast each day a **daily thought** from the writings of Father Moreau is read to the Community by the Superior. All listen in reverent silence, as though hearing anew the words of counsel from the Founder himself. And the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross today are as prompt and as generous in response to these counsels as were those who were privileged to receive them from his lips. One thing is wanting to the Marianites' Centennial happiness, and that is the beatification of their venerated Founder, which they pray for nine times daily, forming a novena of daily petitions, that God may hasten his beatification. What a fitting close it would form for their Centennial year were Holy Mother Church to proclaim Very Reverend Basil Moreau among its blessed!

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[1] St. Paul, I, Cor. 13:7.

It was with the same deep affection for the Founder that Reverend Mother Mary of St. Julien (La Roux) took the initiative November 21, 1945, and wrote to the Superiors General of all the Holy Cross communities—Very Reverend Albert F. Cousineau, Mother Mary of St. Maximilienne, Superior General of the Canadian branch; Mother M. Rose Elizabeth, Superior General of the Indiana branch:

> Two weeks ago I had the pleasure of a visit from the Reverend Father Cousineau, and in our very first conversation he revealed to me his desire, or more correctly, his preparations, to bring the cause of our Venerable Father Founder before the Church in Rome.
>
> Dear Mothers, for a long time my Council and I have been praying much and thinking deeply, and now, subsequently to this interview, we have come to the conclusion that we, the daughters of Holy Cross, must not let this great event transpire without our association; so, consequently discarding all hesitation, we take the initiative.
>
> We should like to extend a cordial invitation to all the different branches of Holy Cross to come to France and discuss amongst us

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[2] Reverend Fathers E. L. Heston, H. P. Bergeron, and Brother Placide, C.S.C., compiled the Circular Letters of Father Moreau.

> what we could do to further the cause of Reverend Father Moreau. Would it not be both joyous and expedient that we should all meet for that purpose in the very place where the foundation of our respective Congregations had been laid; that is, in Le Mans, near the precious remains of our common Father? This great meeting could be made to co-incide with the Feast day of our Venerable Founder, the fourteenth of June. We could then, united, assist at the Solemn High Mass which I shall arrange to be celebrated by the Fathers at Holy Cross; thence, expose our desire to the Reverend Father Cousineau, and, through him, to the Holy Father. Do you, dear Mothers, approve of this meeting?
>
> Greater consequences, dear Mothers, than the transitory union of a few short days will, we hope and pray, result from this step. In a general assembly, before dispersing, we shall, at long last and in common accord, debate on the possibilities of future co-operation amongst all the branches of Holy Cross.

The wholehearted response of the Superiors General of the three Holy Cross communities—France, Indiana, Canada—is recorded in the Chapter, Horizons from Historic Heights, giving the various horizons of the Community. Its repetition here serves but to emphasize the initiative taken by the French Mother House in advancing the cause of Father Moreau.

Father Moreau had two absorbing devotions, veneration for the Holy Face and devotion to Saint Joseph. Fitting it is that an image of the Holy Face should be placed above his tomb, for he ever kept a vigil light burning before the image of the Holy Face while he was living. In 1857 Father Moreau procured facsimiles of the Holy Face image and sent them to all the houses of the Congregation. From that time, devotion to the Holy Face has been a Community custom.

Among other customs, there is the custom of saying two Hail Marys after the Examen just before Noon. This dates back to the time when Father Moreau formed the Associates of Saint Joseph and had the Sisters say one Hail Mary that they might prosper; the second Hail Mary is in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, recited for the Confraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Dedicated to the Sorrowful Mother, the Marianites have another beautiful Community custom. As Our Lady of Seven Dolors stood at the foot of the Cross, and by her very presence gave solace to Jesus in His last agony, the Marianites imitate their Heavenly Patroness by pleading daily in an especial manner for souls who are in their last agony. No soul in agony, from the highest to the lowliest, goes before the judgment seat of God without the Marianites' assistance in that awful hour. For this pleading, the Sisters choose the moments that follow the recitation of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, reciting the prayer, "O Most Merciful Jesus, Lover of Souls," adding the ejaculation, "Heart of Jesus, once in agony, have mercy on the dying."

Very Reverend Father Moreau composed a prayer to Saint Joseph which the Community recites at the close of its night prayers, in which he asks Saint Joseph to obtain subjects for the Community—subjects "capable of giving glory to God" to which Father Moreau added the petition that God would "suffer no others" to enter the Congregation he founded. In this prayer to Saint Joseph, Father Moreau not only asks for an increase of subjects to the Congregation of Holy Cross but he prays, "Extend thy protection over all those who honor thee and do us good." This forms another plea for the Community's benefactors.

Everything serves to remind the Marianites of the deep sentiments of gratitude that should fill their hearts as they celebrate this centennial year. Their Thursday hour of Vigil before the Blessed Sacrament,[3] the Divine Praises said at the end of each Community Mass, the **Agimus tibi** after meals, the invocation at night prayers, "Grand eternal life to all those who do us good for Thy Name's sake," and the request to St. Joseph, "Extend thy protection to those who honor thee and do us good." These are constant expressions of gratitude. The successful labors of a century, the Community's present expansion and its hope for the future should compel each Marianite to fall upon her knees before the Lord of Hosts and repeat unceasingly the eternal canticle of gratitude, **Te Deum Laudamus.** After the Seven Dolor Beads, in the evening, throughout the Centennial year, the **Magnificat** is chanted as an act of praise to the Divine Majesty. Thus, with souls overflowing with gratitude, the members of the Community review these factors in the founding of their Louisiana houses.

The Community's works of a century stand as a monument, a symbol, and a motive of heartfelt prayer to God Who has perused each page in the story of Marianite apostolic zeal; to God Who has closed the last chapter in this history of the Community's soul for labor which animates her being; to God Who will open the book of her life-sacrifice to record the future works which the Marianites, God permitting, will accomplish for the honor and the glory of that Divine Majesty which Marianites love and have served so well. A monument, indeed, these records stand of what Marianite zeal will do to make 'the institutions of the Church thrive in the deep South! As a symbol, too, these pages stand of the work of Marianites, whose heaven-fixed aim it has always been to raise all things upward from the earth, nearer to heaven, closer to God—the purest of aims, the sublimest of works, the loftiest of the motives of life!

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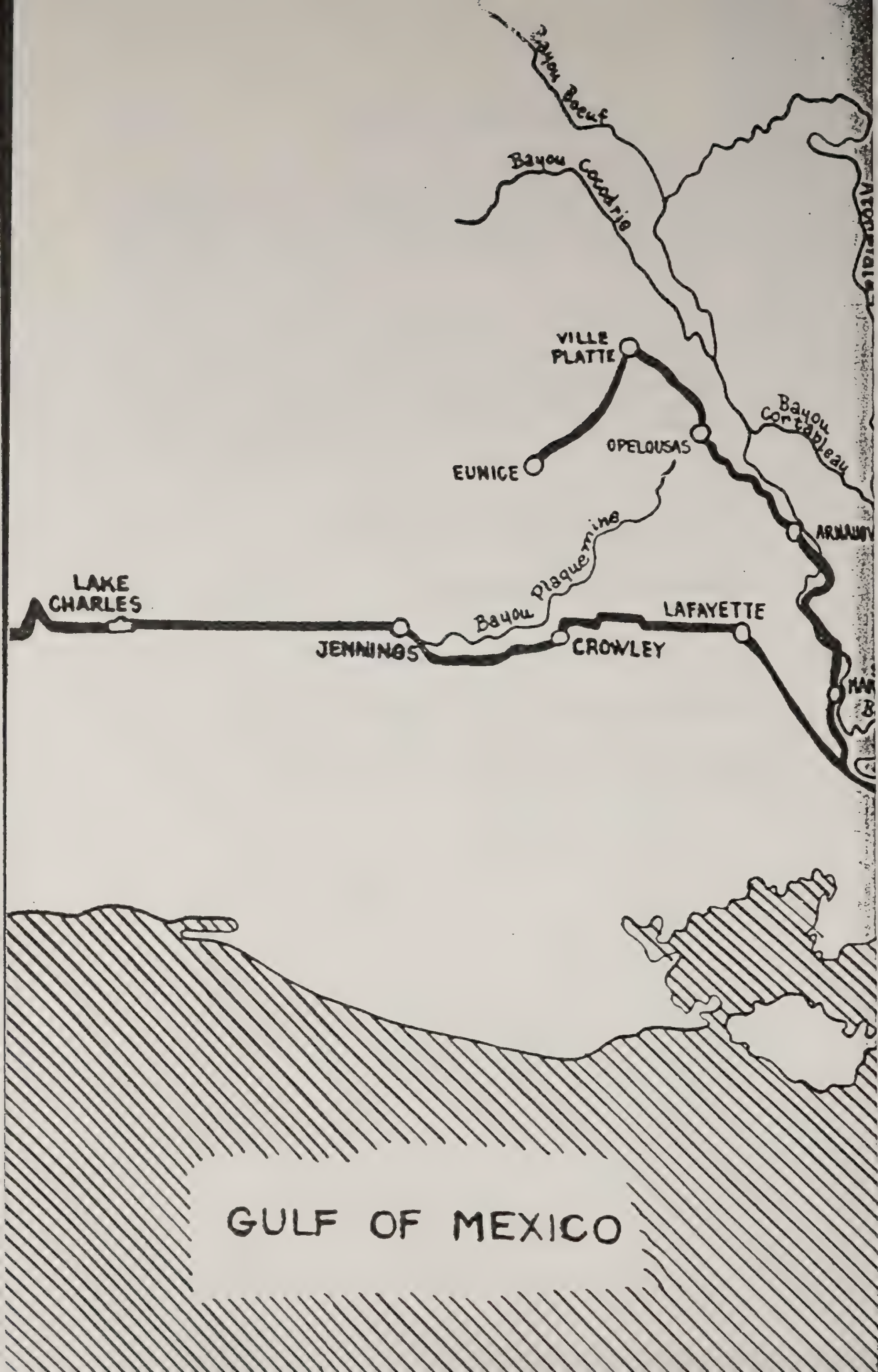
[3] The Community was affiliated with the Association of the Holy Hour at Paray-le-Monial during the year 1941-1942.

What the future holds for the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross no one knows; as was her past, it shall be woven day by day, year by year, unto the end. This, however, may be expected: Unto the end God will bless the efforts of the Marianite Sisters of Holy Cross if they will abide in the spirit of their holy Founder, Father Moreau, accomplishing everything under the Congregation's standard: **In the Cross of Our Lord Jesus Christ.**

A CENTENNIAL PRAYER

"Assist us, O Lord our God:
and defend us evermore
by the might of Thy holy cross,
in whose honor Thou makest us rejoice.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen."

—Roman Missal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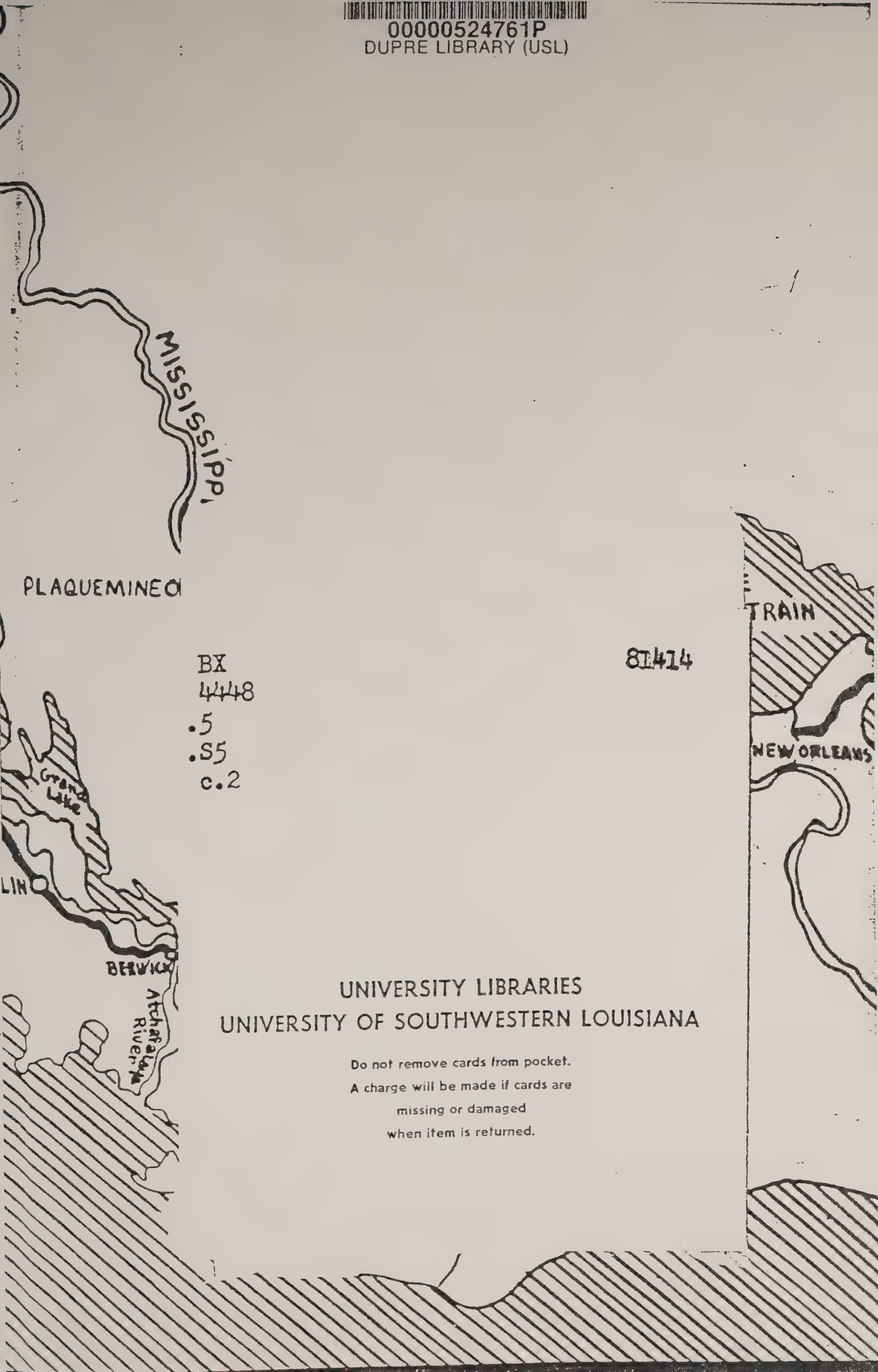
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